SODALITY OF OUR LADY
HINTS
AND
HELPS
FOR THOSE IN CHARGE

SODALITY OF OUR LADY

SODALITY OF OUR LADY

HINTS AND HELPS FOR THOSE IN CHARGE

BY

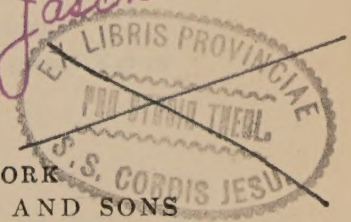
FATHER ELDER MULLAN, S.J.

AUTHOR AND COMPILER OF

"THE BOOK OF THE CHILDREN OF MARY"

✠

Rev. Anton M. Jaschke



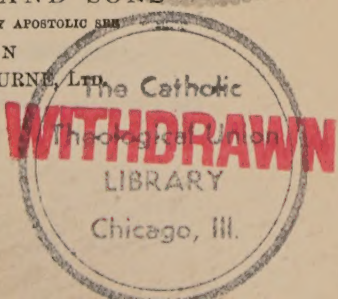
NEW YORK

P. J. KENEDY AND SONS

PUBLISHERS TO THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE

LONDON

R. & T. WASHBOURNE, Ltd.



256
M9585

THE MARYLAND–NEW YORK PROVINCE OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

The book whose title is "Sodality of Our Lady," compiled and arranged by Father Elder Mullan, S. J., having been examined by two theologians of the same Society, whom we had appointed for this, was approved by them.

Therefore, in virtue of powers conferred on us by our Very Reverend Father General, Louis Martin, we grant permission for its publication, if permitted by those to whom it pertains.

In testimony whereof we have issued these letters, signed by our hand and sealed with the seal of our office.

JOSEPH F. HANSELMAN, S. J., *Provincial.*

[Seal.]

NEW YORK, June 2, 1906.

Nihil obstat.

REMIGIUS LAFORT, *Censor Deputatus.*

Imprimatur.

✠JOHN M. FARLEY, *Archbishop of New York.*

Copyright, 1907

BY P. J. KENEDY AND SONS, NEW YORK.

Copyrighted at Stationers' Hall, London.

The right of translation into foreign languages is reserved.

TO

OUR • LADY

QUEEN • AND • ADVOCATE • AND • MOTHER

OF • ALL • HER • SODALISTS

WITH • THE • PRAYER

THAT

WE • WHOSE • HAPPY • TASK • IT • IS

TO • GUIDE • HER • DEAREST • CHILDREN

IN • HER • WAYS

MAY • LEAD • THEM

EVER

ON • AND • UP

TO • BE

LIKE • HER • THEY • CHERISH

HIGHEST • AND • BEST

22.614

I. *The one in charge of the Sodality will always bear in mind that the final scope of every Sodality of Our Lady is the* TRUE PERFECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, *and to this aim will direct all his management, adapting it to the special character of the Sodality in his charge.*

II. *He will strive to establish among his Sodalists an* INNER BODY *making more express profession of this perfection, in order that their conduct in particular may serve for example and encouragement to the rest.*

III. *To fill a need which is felt especially in our day, he will inspire all his Sodalists with the spirit of the* APOSTOLATE, *which each one ought to exercise according to his state of life, by word and example.*

[Solemn resolutions of the Universal Congress of Our Lady at Rome, September, 1904.]

PREFACE

THE sole aim of this little book is to be useful. The plan is as follows: —

The *General Statutes*, which are given first, are the basis of the whole. The remainder of the book comprises twenty-eight chapters in five parts.

The first part presents general information and aids. This includes an outline of the Church Law on these bodies, and directions for applying it in their establishment.

The second part considers the Sodality already in existence, and, after describing the character of the body, proposes general ways of maintaining its successful action.

The third part deals with the spiritual life of the members and with matters that touch its various occasions and manifestations. Here belong the exercises of piety, individual and collective, and the works of zeal.

The fourth part has to do with the less frequent Sodality events, treating them in the order of their frequency. Some hints are added as to members no longer active.

The fifth part consists of a chapter of personal suggestions for the one in charge of the Sodality.

As to the sources. The *General Statutes* are a careful translation from the official document. The *Points from Church Law* have been drawn from Beringer's invaluable work on Indulgences, and from various works on Canon Law. The practical suggestions, which form the main part of the book, are largely the result of repeated experiments made by many directors, sub-directors, and directresses.

The hints and helps cannot, of course, all be turned to use everywhere. Many things that are possible in one Sodality cannot be done in another. The circumstances have always to be measured. But when one looks about and considers, one often finds much possible and even easy which had been thought so difficult as to be out of the question. Besides, it is very often true that *where there is a will there is a way.* It will be understood that this little book is meant for sub-directors and directresses as well as priest-directors. The last of these titles has oftenest been used for convenience.

The good will to lead their Sodalists on to what is best and highest is abundant in Sodality directors, sub-directors, and directresses. It was the hope of somehow stimulating this good will and giving it new objects to work on that led the author, or rather compiler, to put this book together.

ELDER MULLAN, S. J.

Woodstock College.

CONTENTS

PAGE

General Statutes of the Sodality xi

PART I

Chapter

I Points from Church Law about the Sodality of Our Lady 1

II Practical Way of Establishing a Sodality 27

PART II

III What a Sodality is 37

IV The Rule 51

V Fraternal Union 57

VI Means of Keeping up Interest 65

VII Finances 81

VIII Choice and Treatment of Officers . . . 89

PART III

IX Exercises of Piety 103

X Chapel and Belongings 117

XI Seats at Meetings 123

XII Meetings 129

XIII Exercises of the Regular Meeting . . . 135

Reading 137

Invocation of the Holy Ghost 144

Office 145

Conference 147

Final Prayers 157

XIV The Sacraments 159

XV Works of Zeal 169

CHAPTER PAGE

PART IV

XVI Monthly Patrons 181
XVII Monthly Recollection 185
XVIII The Month of May 193
XIX Patronal Feast 197
XX Annual Retreat 201
XXI Renewal of the Act of Consecration . . 211
XXII Final Departure from School 215
XXIII Members no Longer Active 219

PART V

XXIV The One in Charge of the Sodality . . 225

INDEX 233

General Statutes of the Sodality of Our Lady

What follows may be called the essence of the Sodality Rule.

It is well known that different classes of Sodalists are governed by different Rules. This is perfectly natural. The Rules of all, however, have a large amount of likeness. We have, then, set down here their common features.

Indeed, the General Statutes that follow have been themselves expressly approved as a common sketch of the Sodality Rule.

Besides the outlines here set forth, each Sodality may have particular Rules of its own. To be authoritative, these must be approved by those competent. Who they are will be said further on in the book. Such special approbation of specific Rules has already been given for the First Primary Sodality, for the Children of Mary in this country, and for certain other bodies. Each Sodality should see to this in its own case.

I. Aim

The Sodality of Our Lady has for its main object, to arouse and foster in the souls of the members a strong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in order that, being fortified by the special protection of a Mother so great, they may live a pious Christian life and die a happy death.

II. Exercises in Common

On a fixed day, ordinarily once a week, they assemble at a certain hour, to promote in themselves devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the spirit of piety by means of an exhortation given by the one who presides, the reading of pious books, prayers and hymns in common, pious meditations or other religious exercises.

To the same end, they make the *Spiritual Exercises* every year for some days, approach the Holy Table in a body often, particularly on Our Lady's feasts, and make in the usual way the Six Sundays of St. Aloysius.

III. Good Works Recommended

(*For the most part enriched with Indulgences*)

1. To say some special prayers each day in honor of their heavenly Patroness — in the First

Primary Sodality the members are instructed to recite three Hail Marys morning and evening.

2. If they can conveniently, to recite daily the Rosary or the Office of Our Lady, or at least some part of them.

3. To examine their conscience in the evening.

4. To give some time to meditation on divine things, or to the reading of pious books.

5. To hear Mass every day, if they can.

6. To approach the Sacraments at least once a month.

7. To make a General Confession once or twice a year.

8. To help on zealously all that makes for the increase and defence of the Church and of religion.

9. To labor to bring back to the way of salvation by example and teaching those who have strayed from the faith or from Christian virtue.

10. To be diligent in works of mercy, particularly towards Sodalists that are ill.

11. To go to the funerals of Sodalists that die and to offer up special prayers for them.

12. Finally, to insist on the acquirement not only of the virtues which no Christian can be without, but even to aim at surpassing their companions in devotion, purity, humility, modesty, and diligence in the duties of their state.

IV. Officers

As to what concerns the officers of the Sodality, the method of election, their duties, etc., let the Manuals be consulted, many of which have been published for the use of Sodalists.

Chapter I

Points from Church Law about The Sodality of Our Lady

The Sodality of Our Lady

✠

What Sodality Is Here In Question

THERE are in the Church a number of organizations having devotion to the Blessed Virgin as the central motive. None of them is in question here but the *Sodality of Our Lady.*

Name

This body is variously called in Church Law, being sometimes given the name of Sodality (*Sodalitas* or *Sodalitium*), sometimes that of Confraternity (*Confraternitas*), sometimes that of Congregation (*Congregatio*). The last word is the one commonest in French, in Spanish, and in Italian. In English, however, the name *Congregation* is applied in another way, and *Sodality* is the usual designation of the Society here considered.

Definition

The *Sodality of Our Lady* is an ecclesiastical corporation composed of the faithful, and canonically erected and aggregated to the First Primary

Sodality of the Roman College, and having as its purpose the advancement of Christian life through devotion to the Blessed Mother of God and the performance of good works.

A word on some of the elements of this definition.

Composed of the Faithful. The members may come from any class of society, be of any age (after attaining the use of reason), and be of either sex. Needless to add, entering the Sodality is a free act of the candidate.

Devotion to the Blessed Mother of God. This is the Sodality's great means of advancing in the Christian life and forms the distinguishing feature of the body.

Performance of Good Works. The good works taken up are directed to the personal sanctification of the members. They consist of private and public exercises of devotion and of works of mercy and of zeal. It must be added that no one of these exercises or works is essential: it is only required that there should be some such ways of furthering holiness and preparing for a happy death. and helping the priest in church work.

Canonical Erection. This is an act of one in competent authority, by which he constitutes the body an ecclesiastical moral person, recognized as such thereafter by the Church. The act is like that of the State when it incorporates a society and gives it a legal existence distinct from that of its members.

Aggregation to the First Primary Sodality. By such aggregation the Sodality is affiliated to the head Sodality in the Roman College, and becomes in so far a part of it that it shares in its prayers and good works and in all the Indulgences, favors, and privileges, granted or to be granted to the First Primary.

Ecclesiastical Corporation. As such, the Sodality has rights and duties, just as an individual has. Its existence is also quite distinct from that of its members, and continues even when there are no actual members at all. Nay more, a Sodality of Our Lady cannot be dissolved even by a unanimous vote of the members, and if at any time a Sodality that had ceased to exercise its functions should again — any time within one hundred years — begin to do so, the Indulgences would still be gained as before and the corporate being of the body would be unaltered — indeed, as a corporate body it had never ceased to exist.

A Sodality can, however, be suppressed by the Sovereign Pontiff. The Bishop also has power for this, but not without cause and with canonical process, and an appeal lies in the matter to superior Church authority.

Title

It is essential that each Sodality to be erected and aggregated should have a Primary Title.

The *Primary Title* is always *Our Lady* under

the name of a feast or mystery of hers. Thus, the First Primary is the Sodality of *Our Lady of the Annunciation.* A great Sodality abroad has the Primary Title of *Our Lady Immaculate.* This, indeed, is a very common title, in America and elsewhere.

A *Secondary Title* also may be taken. The name of a Saint, for instance, or of the Holy Angels, or of the Child Jesus, etc. A Secondary Title, however, is not essential, as the Primary is.

In a Sodality, then, that has two Patrons, the full title runs thus: *The Sodality of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Aloysius; The Sodality of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom and the Child Jesus,* etc.

Under the head of Title, it is well to note that in applying for the approval or for the erection and aggregation of a Sodality of Our Lady, one has to state the *class of persons* of whom the body is to be composed. It is this that ordinarily is used to designate the Sodality. Hence we hear of *The Married Men's Sodality, The Girls' Sodality,* etc. These are convenient terms, but are not the canonical designations. The proper title is as described above and it might be better if it were used in preference to the other, or if, at least, both designations were employed and the body were called, for instance, *The Married Men's Sodality of Our Lady of the Purification and St. Charles Borromeo.*

It may be added that certain names are current for Sodalities of a special kind. The name *Children of Mary* is one of these. This is a title lovingly assumed in some places by girl or women Sodalists of Our Lady, but has no particular approval of the Church. It should be remarked that there is a union of the Children of Mary (*Figlie di Maria*) under the Patronage of Our Lady Immaculate and St. Agnes. This is a *Pious Union* of girls, established in 1864 in the Church of St. Agnes at Rome, with power to aggregate to itself other similar Societies of girls. It has most of the Indulgences of the First Primary of the Roman College, but not all, and not all its Privileges, and is, of course, not so widespread. This Union of the Children of Mary has no connection with the Sodality of Our Lady.

Canonical Erection

The first thing essential for the establishment of a Sodality of Our Lady is canonical erection. Aggregation without it is invalid, and if there is any doubt about the fact of erection, it cannot be presumed, but must be proved. For this reason it is wise to have the canonical erection recorded in writing and exposed in a prominent place.

The act of canonical erection belongs of ordinary right to the Bishop of the diocese. His Vicar General is not empowered to erect Sodalities of Our Lady, unless he has a special mandate of the

Bishop to do so. The mandate, however, may be given in general for all cases. The Vicar General, if he erects a Sodality under such mandate, must mention in the official instrument his doing so under the mandate.

Besides the Bishop, the Sovereign Pontiff, of course, or any body or person commissioned by him can canonically erect a Sodality. The Propaganda, for example, has the power, and, as is the case with similar bodies connected with other orders in the Church, it is conferred also on the General of the Society of Jesus, as delegate of the Holy See. The General, however, cannot erect a Sodality without leave of the Bishop of the diocese, except in a Jesuit house or church, and this leave must precede the act of erection; subsequent approval is not sufficient. Even in a Jesuit house or church, it may be said that the Bishop's permission is required, but that permission is given by the Bishop's allowing such a house or church to be established in his diocese.

To effect the canonical erection of a Sodality of Our Lady, nothing but a mere expression of the will is required. Usually, however, it is done in writing.

Among those who have power to erect Sodalities of Our Lady, it is mostly the Jesuit General to whom it is left. This is a mere matter of convenience and is meant to prevent confusion and delays.

In applying for the consent of the Ordinary and for the canonical erection, the particular body concerned must be clearly designated. The designation includes (1) the *class of persons* forming the Sodality, (2) the *Primary Title* and the *Secondary Title* (if one is taken), (3) the *place*. It is not essential, but it is correct to indicate, (4) any departures from the ordinary Sodality Rule contained in the General Statutes: indeed, that the peculiar Rules of each Sodality should be submitted to the Bishop for his consent is the express wish of the Jesuit General, whose right it is to approve Sodality Rules.

As many Sodalities of Our Lady as one wishes may be erected in the same place and in the same church.

It may be added that a Sodality of Our Lady erected in one church, etc., can remove to another without losing its Indulgences. The only thing necessary is the permission of the Bishop: probably it is not required to get the consent of the Jesuit General.

Aggregation to the First Primary Sodality

The First Primary Sodality was canonically erected by the Sovereign Pontiff Gregory XIII., Dec. 5, 1584. Since that time, it and its affiliated Sodalities have numbered as members over 25,000,000 of the most fervent and most distinguished Catholics throughout the world.

By grant of Gregory XIII., enlarged by Sixtus V., Clement VIII., Gregory XV., Benedict XIV., and Leo XII., and confirmed by Leo XIII., the power to aggregate to the First Primary is vested in the Father General (or Vicar General) of the Society of Jesus. This power, however, he can — except in a Jesuit house or church — exercise only with the express approval of the Bishop of the diocese.

It may be added that the act of aggregating is performed by the General not precisely, it would seem, as General, but as *Head Director of the First Primary.*

Besides the Sovereign Pontiff and his delegate for this, the Jesuit General, the Propaganda has also the faculty to bestow on Sodalities of Our Lady the Indulgences of the First Primary, and this without recourse to the General. Propaganda can communicate this faculty to its Missionary Bishops, but does not, it seems, do so in this country: the reason probably is because it is so easy here to apply to the General. Of course, this communication of Indulgences is not aggregation to the First Primary and gives no share in good works and prayers.

In making the petition for aggregation, the following points should be specified: —

1. *The Bishop's consent* to erection and aggregation, or the fact of erection, if the Bishop has executed this act, along with his consent to the aggregation.

2. The *class of persons* forming the Sodality.

3. The *Primary Title;* and the *Secondary Title,* if one is taken.

4. The *place.*

5. Any *departures from the General Statutes.*

It has been said that more Sodalities than one may be erected in the same church or place. The same is true of aggregation. This makes it possible to have in the same church distinct sodalities for the different classes of people. Another way of effecting this division of work is to have one Sodality with several sections. These form but one Sodality in Church Law and are under one Director's canonical headship.

There may be even more Sodalities than one for the same class of persons in the same place or church.

In aggregating, the General cannot limit or extend the Indulgences and Privileges: he must communicate all that the First Primary has.

Again, when he aggregates, it must be forever and not only for a certain time.

To sum up, then, in a Jesuit house or church, canonical erection and aggregation are the right of the Jesuit General. In all other establishments, the Bishop's leave is essential for both acts, and he may also canonically erect if he wishes. Ordinarily, both acts are performed by the General. This he does by a *Diploma* sent to the petitioner. The instrument should be carefully preserved and

be kept on exhibition in the Sacristy, or in some other prominent place. Should the Diploma, however, be lost or destroyed, the Sodality does not therefore cease to exist: the Diploma is to be kept rather as a witness to the fact of erection and aggregation.

The Director

The Sodality validly erected and aggregated is a legally existing body, but it cannot have members unless through a Director.

The Director of a Sodality of Our Lady must be a priest duly appointed to his office.

In Jesuit houses and churches, the Directors of Sodalities are appointed by the Provincial.

The Head Director of the other Sodalities of a Diocese is the Bishop, but he usually appoints others in direct charge of the several bodies. He is not obliged to use any set form in this appointment and, of course, is at liberty to grant the petition of a Sodality or a Community to have a certain priest in the office.

The Bishop should name a Director when he erects a Sodality, as the Pastor is not *ipso facto* Director of the Sodalities in his church — unless he is the only priest there.

The Bishop is not obliged to appoint as Director a priest belonging to the parish in which the Sodality is erected. His choice, in fact, is entirely unrestricted.

The appointment can be recalled by the Ordinary whenever he pleases. As he had the power to make, so has he power to rescind the appointment.

The Bishop can also appoint another to receive members, either for single cases, or in any way he wishes.

If the appointment is not recalled by the Bishop, the priest continues to be Director of the Sodality until his death: he does not lose his position on the death of the Bishop.

In many instances — though without any obligation — the Bishop makes the Pastor of a church, as Pastor, Director of a Sodality. In this case, when the Pastor dies, or is removed, his successor as Pastor becomes Director of the Sodality without new appointment. The same is true of a chaplain, etc.

In all other circumstances, on the death of a Director, a new appointment must be made by the Bishop.

The Director of a Sodality of Our Lady may, for reasonable cause, depute another priest to take his place in the reception of members, which is the only function for which a Director, or another lawfully appointed, is canonically essential.

It is well to remember how important it is that the Director should be duly appointed. Without that, the reception of members is invalid and

the so-called Sodalists gain none of the Sodality Indulgences.

The Sodality of Our Lady has no special Medal. The Director, therefore, does not need peculiar faculties for blessing such Medals as may be given the candidates.

It remains to speak of Sub-directors and Directresses. These have no canonical status, but are simply vicegerents of the Director in the actual running of the Sodality. They can, however, and usually do, conduct the meetings, lead in prayers, give the exhortations and instructions, etc., — always leaving to the Director the reception of new members into the Sodality. This last, as has been said, is the only act that is reserved to the Director, or a priest his deputy, or another priest appointed by the Bishop. In some Sodalities, there is a *reception of candidates* as such. If this is meant to give the candidates the right to the Sodality *Indulgences*, the act must be performed by one having proper authority, or it is invalid. Otherwise, the Sub-director or the Directress can so receive candidates to postulancy.

In the direction of the Sodality, the Director is not at liberty to go according to his own ideas, but must keep conscientiously to the usages proper to the Sodality, especially when the gaining of Indulgences has been declared dependent on them. Particularly, he must always have in view the special end of the Sodality, see to the maintenance

of fervor, the observance of the Rules and the fulfilment of the conditions for the Indulgences, and secure the body from abuses, especially from ambitious and avaricious tendencies.

Rules

Absolutely speaking, it is not essential that a Sodality of Our Lady should have any Rules at all. It can be canonically erected without any, and the Indulgences can be gained without them.

At first there were no general Rules of Our Lady's Sodality, the individual bodies aggregated following simply the lead of the First Primary. This was natural enough, as the earliest Sodalities were erected in Jesuit houses or churches. But even after the Father General was empowered to aggregate other Sodalities, he did not issue or approve any common Rules until as late as the last quarter of the 19th century. Then it was judged well, for the sake of uniformity, to outline the nature and work of these bodies. This was done in the *General Statutes* found elsewhere in this book. In them the Father General simply crystallized the customs and rules of the various Sodalities voluntarily followed by each.

These *General Statutes* may be now considered as the organic constitution of the Sodality of Our Lady. The reason for this statement is as follows.

The power to make, alter, and approve Rules for the Sodality of Our Lady was conferred by the

Sovereign Pontiffs on the General, and the Sodality was bidden by them to obey such Rules as he should make or approve. He has made and approved the *General Statutes.*

To make any change in the *General Statutes* requires the authorization of the Father General; in Sodalities not erected in a Jesuit house or church, alteration in the Statutes or addition to them requires also the consent of the Bishops. The Vicar General, here as in the case of canonical erection, has no powers unless in virtue of the Bishop's special mandate.

Membership

Canonically speaking, a Sodalist of Our Lady is a duly admitted member of a validly erected and validly aggregated Sodality.

What, then, is due reception?

This is a very simple matter. Supposing the valid existence of the Sodality and the valid appointment of the Director (and valid deputation by him or by the Bishop of another priest, if the actual reception is done by another), there are but three things necessary.

These are:

1. That the Director, or his lawful deputy, should give some external sign that he wishes to admit the candidate to be a member.

2. That the candidate should give some external sign that he wishes to be received.

3. That the name of the candidate should be entered on the Sodality roll.

A word about each of these points.

1. The external sign may be of any kind, and words are not essential. The mere act on the Director's part of entering the name on the roll is enough.

2. No particular words are necessary on the candidate's part, any sign whatever suffices.

3. Enrolment is absolutely necessary for the validity of the act. As is evident, enrolment supposes that each Sodality has a record or register in which to enter the names of those admitted.

The enrolling of the members can be done by one not the Director.

If the Director receives to membership in a place where there is no Sodality, he is to have the name or names entered in some Sodality of the class of persons concerned.

The new member or members can gain the Sodality Indulgences on the day of reception, even if the enrolment in the register does not take place on that day.

A Director can receive members in a place other than that in which his Sodality exists, but he receives, of course, into that Sodality only of which he is Director.

Only in extraordinary cases can a member be validly received when absent, that is, when he is not where the Director is.

If a Sodality has been erected for married men only, unmarried men cannot be received into it. So in similar cases.

If a Director has power to receive all indiscriminately, he can receive himself also.

Nothing else whatever is essential beyond what has been mentioned above. But there is always a certain amount of ceremony added.

Under this head may be mentioned the *probation* through which candidates are usually required to pass. This time of candidacy varies in length in different Sodalities. No time is absolutely essential.

The details of the reception are found in ordinary Manuals of the Sodality. The traditional ceremonies are the following:

1. The *Invocation of the Holy Ghost.*
2. The *Sermon.*
3. The *Blessing of the Medals.*
4. The *Questioning of the Candidates.*
5. The *Act of Consecration.*

(After this a candle is presented by each one to the Director.)

6. The *formal Reception.*

This includes:

a. The *Investing with the Medal.*
b. The *Presentation of the Manual.*
c. The *Recitation of the Words of Reception.*
d. The *Presentation of the Diploma.*
e. The *Enrolment.*

7. The *Hymn of Thanksgiving.*

In some Sodalities, a *Profession of Faith* is added.

Any one validly admitted remains a member all his life unless he is positively excluded from membership — a punishment sometimes necessary. A member may, of course, also lose his membership by formally renouncing his connection with the Sodality.

Membership — and consequently the right to Indulgences — is not lost by one's no longer attending meetings, no longer receiving the Sacraments with the rest, etc. He may return at any time to his duties and be received to all his rights in the body.

However, it must not be understood that the Sodality is obliged to readmit immediately a member who has been delinquent. A member, indeed, he remains, but he may be required to pass through a probation before recovering his good standing.

Duties

Of duties in the strict sense — binding under sin — there are none in the Sodality of Our Lady. The body is governed by the law of love.

The members are expected, however, to carry out the points set down in the *General Statutes*, and may be suspended from membership, or entirely excluded from the body, for not doing so.

They are required, too, to observe such other prescriptions and customs as are of force in their own Sodality.

Officers

The only officer canonically essential in a Sodality of Our Lady is the Director. But all Sodalities have others, and the custom is recommended in the *General Statutes.*

The officers may be chosen in any way the Director, or the Sodality, pleases — as far as Church Law goes. But it is not well to depart from the time-honored method which is usually found in Manuals, especially as it is very simple and very efficacious. The method is the following:

The Council of the Sodality chooses three names. These are proposed to the whole Sodality. One ballot is cast. The one of the three who gets most votes is Prefect; the next, First Assistant; the other, Second Assistant.

The Sodality does not vote on the rest of the officers. They are elected by the Council, except the lowest, who are appointed by the Director, or the Prefect, or both. The Council, besides the three officers just named, usually includes a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Master of Candidates, and some Consultors. Besides the Council, there is nearly always a Sacristan or two, a Reader, a Choir Master, etc., according to circumstances and the particular rules and customs.

It is well to have all these points clearly defined in the Manual used, or in the Special Constitution of each body.

It conduces to the general good for the Director (Sub-Director or Directress) to submit a list of candidates for each office and not allow a choice except among those so proposed. This gives the one in charge the predominance which must always be in his hands, according to the ancient custom and the will of the Sovereign Pontiff.

Once the way of conducting affairs of this kind is fixed, deviation should not be easily permitted.

Indulgences

There are rich Indulgences belonging to the Sodality of Our Lady. They are found in brief in most Manuals and more at length in such books as "Beringer on Indulgences." An authentic summary of them was published by the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, June 23, 1885, with the dates of the original instruments added to the several Indulgences.

By a privilege similar to that enjoyed by certain other Confraternities, the Sodality Indulgences, since Sept. 17, 1887, can be gained only by actual aggregation to the First Primary, and cannot be communicated even by Bishops that have extraordinary faculties in these matters, except by those Missionary Bishops under Propaganda who have received the special faculty required.

It is to be noted that in the Sodality of Our Lady, as in other Confraternities, aggregation to the First Primary gives the right to all Indulgences that will ever be granted to it, even *after* such aggregation. On the contrary, Sodalities that get their Indulgences by the special faculty of Propaganda just mentioned gain the Indulgences that have *already* been granted, but not, it would seem, those that shall be given in the future.

To gain the Plenary Indulgence connected with the weekly meeting, no other prayers are requisite beyond the Sodality prayers said in common, provided one says them for the intention of the Holy Father. Again, the same Plenary Indulgence can be gained for meetings held but twice a month.

When, in the grant of an Indulgence, the choice of the day for gaining it is left to the Sodalist, the Director cannot fix the day so that the Indulgence cannot be gained on another.

When a Sodality feast day is transferred to another day, the Indulgence attached to it is transferred also to that day.

If a Sodalist is hindered by sickness or imprisonment from making a visit to a church which would otherwise be necessary to gain a Sodality Indulgence, he can, without the visit, gain the Indulgence by performing merely the other works required. Indeed, if, in the judgment of a prudent Confessor, he is lawfully hindered in any other way, he can gain the Indulgence by fulfilling,

in place of the visit, another pious work imposed by the Confessor.

Money and Property

The property of a Sodality erected in a Jesuit house or church belongs to the house or church.

This is not so in the case of other Sodalities, but the property is the possession of the body itself. Consequently, like other ecclesiastical property, it is subject to episcopal visitation.

Money contributed by members at reception into the Sodality and afterwards, should be looked on as an alms and not as a condition necessary for admission or for continuance of membership. Needless to say, this money should be used only for the purposes of the Sodality.

As to cases where it is the Sodality that is the owner, it is clearly just that it should have a say in the use and disposal of its property. This the Sodality can do by a vote at the very inception of the body, transferring all Sodality rights over property to the Council of the Sodality, or to the Director, or to any one else. Or it can vote on such questions whenever they come up. To avoid all complications in this matter, it is well to make provision for the whole subject in the Rules of the particular Sodality.

Property of the Sodality, with regard to alienation, is subject to the ordinary laws of the Church on ecclesiastical property.

Exemption

The Sodality of Our Lady has been exempted from the prescriptions about Confraternities issued in the *Bull Quaecunque* of Clement VIII., Dec. 7, 1604. The exemption was first given by Gregory XV., April 15, 1621, was confirmed by Benedict XIV., Sept. 29, 1748, and was extended to Sodalities not in Jesuit houses and churches by Leo XIII., June 23, 1885.

Other Confraternities enjoy the same exemption, at least in part; a fact which renders their establishment and conduct considerably easier.

Changes

Any detail of the Sodality existence or functions can be altered by the same authority that originated it. Thus the Bishop and the Jesuit General conjointly can change the Title and modify the Rules. The Bishop can change the Director, etc. In the same way, in Sodalities which have nothing fixed in the approved Rule as to elections, the power to alter the method is within the competence of the Sodality, or the Director, etc.

A Sodality can remove permanently to another church, chapel, etc., within the diocese with the permission of the Bishop — probably, without recourse, in any case, to the General of the Society of Jesus.

Should the church, chapel, etc., to which a Sodality belongs, be destroyed, and a new one be built on the same or a different spot, with the same or a different title, the Sodality continues in the new church, chapel, etc., unchanged.

Chapter II

Practical Way of Establishing a Sodality

Aggregation

AS has been seen, there are two kinds of Sodalities of Our Lady. Both are associations of the faithful for the promotion of piety, but they differ in this, that one is and the other is not aggregated to the First Primary Sodality of the Roman College.

Any Sodality that has our Blessed Mother for Primary Patron can be united with the Roman Sodality. Such aggregation is a distinct advantage in the following respects:

1. It gives the right to many rich Indulgences. 2. It makes the Sodalists members of a world-wide association, which now numbers over a million Sodalists. 3. It puts before them the good example of so many brethren. 4. It makes them share in the prayers and good works of all.

If a Sodality has not been aggregated to the First Primary, the way to do it is so simple that the one in charge ought not to excuse himself easily for not taking the trouble.

Steps to Take]

In the case of a Sodality in a Jesuit house or church, to obtain aggregation to the First Primary

application is made to the Father Provincial. In all other cases two steps have to be taken. These are: Getting the approval of the Ordinary of the Diocese, and making application to the Father General of the Society of Jesus.

1. *Getting the Approval of the Ordinary*

The Bishop may give his approval in writing or not: the former is the usual way and is much to be preferred.

The simplest way of procuring this approval is to write a letter to him asking it. Two copies may be sent, one to be retained for the Diocesan archives, if he so wishes, the other to be returned to the sender with the words of approval added.

There is no form prescribed for this letter, but the following may be used: —

> *Your Lordship,* — Being desirous of helping on devotion to our ever Blessed Mother Mary and realizing how powerful an aid for goodness of life is afforded by Our Lady's Sodality, I humbly pray your Lordship to give your approval to the canonical erection and the aggregation to the First Primary Sodality of a Society in which I am interested. It is a Sodality of (*state the class of persons forming the body*); has as Primary Patron Our Lady (*add the feast, or mystery*); as Secondary Patron (*give the name*); and is to exist in

(*state the place*), of (*give the city, etc.*) in your Lordship's diocese.

Will your Lordship kindly approve the particular Rules also which we propose to adopt? They are enclosed herewith.

Begging your Lordship's special blessing on the work, from which, it is hoped, much good will result for souls, I have the honor to be

Your Lordship's humble servant in Christ,

---

2. *Making Application to the Father General*

The approval of the Ordinary received, the only other thing to do is to apply to the Father General of the Society of Jesus. This also can be done by letter. No form is prescribed, but that which follows may be used. The Father General at Rome may be addressed, but the letter is sent to the nearest Provincial (or Mission Superior) of the Society of Jesus. The name and address of the latter can be found in the Catholic Directory.

Your Paternity, — I have conceived the desire to have canonically erected and aggregated to the First Primary Sodality of the Roman College a Society in which I am interested.

The Ordinary of the Diocese gave his consent to the canonical erection and the aggregation on (*state the day, month and year.*)

The Sodality is composed of (*give the class of persons*).

The Primary Patron is Our Lady (*add the feast, or mystery*).

The Secondary Patron is (*add the name*).

The Sodality is connected with (*name the church, chapel, school, etc.*) in (*state the place*), of the Diocese of (*give the name*).

Begging of your Paternity the favor of canonical erection and aggregation for this Society, I have the honor to be, dear Very Reverend Father General,

Your Paternity's
humble servant in Christ,

Notes on the Above Letters

The application in both cases can be made by any person, priest or not.

The Bishop may, if he wishes, himself canonically erect the Sodality. If he does so, the fact is to be stated in the letter to the Father General.

A word about each of the items to be specified in the two letters.

The class of people. The Sodality may be composed of the faithful of both sexes, or of either sex, of married men or women, of single men or women, of boys or girls, of merchants, of students, etc.

The Diploma of Aggregation may be worded so

that several branches of the same Sodality may come under it. Thus, for instance, if it read *Faithful of both sexes*, the Director might have a married men's branch, a married women's, etc., all under the same Diploma. These would then not be distinct Sodalities, and the canonical head of each, as has been said above, would be the Director appointed for the general Sodality of which they are branches.

It is to be remembered, though, that more Sodalities than one, even if any or all are of the same class of people, can exist in the same church, etc.

The Primary Patron. It is essential that this should be Our Lady. Some feast or mystery of hers is also to be taken as distinctive of each Sodality. This is chosen by the Sodality, or the person or persons concerned with its establishment.

The Secondary Patron. It is usual, but not necessary, to have a Secondary Patron also. Any Patron may be chosen, the choice being made as in the case of the Primary Patron.

Holy Angel Sodalities, when rightly constituted, have the Holy Angels as Secondary Patrons, unless Our Lady Queen of Angels, or some such phrase, is the Primary Title. Aloysians have St. Aloysius. The Holy Infant Sodality can have the Holy Infant as Secondary Patron.

The Place. This includes the name of the church, etc., and of the town, etc., and of the diocese.

A Sodality can be erected in a church, a chapel, a college, a school — in a word, in any pious place whatever.

The Appointment of Director

Besides the Diploma of erection and of aggregation, it is necessary to have a Director also.

The Director may be appointed before the erection of the Sodality, or after it; but, as is evident, the appointment does not go into effect until the canonical erection is a fact.

Organizing

It often happens that a Sodality that is already in existence wishes to become aggregated to the First Primary. The steps to take are exactly the same as those described above.

If there is as yet no society and it is desired to establish a Sodality, the Diploma of Erection and Aggregation can be got before organization or after.

The work of organizing can be gone through in various ways. It is best to assemble for the purpose those only who will make good members when the time for reception comes. They need not be many. They can be formed to the Sodality customs and trained in the Sodality virtues during a postulancy, which could be gone through while the Diploma is being procured, for this may take several months.

It goes without saying that the first thing to do in organizing is to explain the nature of the Sodality and its Rules.

When the postulancy is finished, the candidates — or as many as the Director thinks fit — can be received as members. Officers can be informally elected or appointed *pro tem.* while the whole Sodality is in a chrysalis state, but when a sufficient number of members have been received, the election should take place again, and in proper form, only they being eligible.

Aggregation does not Destroy Autonomy

It may be well, before going on, to dispel an illusion which exists in some minds about aggregation to the Roman Sodality. Does not this affiliation destroy the autonomy of one's own society? Is not the freedom of action, and consequently the zeal, of the Director hampered by it? Is he not put under rules and regulations sent from the Roman Society, and forever annoyed by interference from that quarter?

The answer to these questions is simple and clear. Aggregation to the First Primary gives a Sodality many Indulgences and Privileges, but leaves the Director entirely free as to the conduct of his own association. To be sure, the rules he follows should be approved at Rome, but outside of this, he is not at all less his own master after aggregation than before, and need fear no inter-

ference whatever from the Head Sodality. He will be expected, of course, to keep his Sodality in line with similar bodies elsewhere — such was the purpose of the Sovereign Pontiffs in making the First Primary the source of Privileges to the rest — but no influence will ever be brought to bear on him to force him to do so: he will be left — he and his Sodality — to his own devices. It is, therefore, perfectly true to say that aggregation means benefits only and induces no limitation of one's freedom of action.

Chapter III

What a Sodality of Our Lady is

The Three Characteristics

IT is exceedingly necessary to have a clear idea what a Sodality ought to be. Of this the History of the Sodality and its authentic Rules give the same description. Let us catch its main features.

1. *Special Devotion to Our Lady.* The first requisite and the great purpose of the association is to foster devotion to the glorious and ever Blessed Mother of our Lord.

Devotion to Our Lady will show itself in various ways. In some, as in St. Stanislas, it will be a fervent and tender love. In some, it will take the form of keen endeavor to make themselves more and more like our Blessed Mother. Some, like St. Francis de Sales, will be impressed with the fact that the Mother of our Saviour is wonderfully kind to the sinner: they will be zealous for the salvation of souls. Some, like St. Alphonsus Liguori, will be attracted by her absolute purity and her freedom from sin: they will strive to keep from stain themselves and draw others away from the occasions of sin. Some, like St. Peter Fourier, will be incited by their love for Mary to practise charity to their neighbor. Some, like Blessed Grignon de Montfort, will, in the excess

of their love, dedicate themselves to her as her slaves forever — and thus in many ways will devotion to her become evident and have play. How it shows itself does not matter; the essential thing is that in the Sodalist's heart there shall be a very special devotion to Mary.

2. *To aim at more than ordinary goodness* in its members is the second characteristic of a Sodality. Probably all Sodalists understand it to be so, and when they enter, do in reality mean to live a better life than the common Catholic leads. And they should, for special devotion to Our Lady would be no more than a mere sentiment if it did not urge to what is high and good.

Later on, if the Sodalists' first fervor cools and they fall back to the ordinary, it is the Director's task to win them again, for our Blessed Mother, to the higher life.

The higher life meant is not necessarily the *religious* life; that is reserved for those of the Sodality that bind themselves by the three vows of religion. The Sodalists' higher life, while living in the world, is the life of Christian perfection.

3. *A certain exclusiveness* is the third characteristic. Without it cannot be maintained the high standard set. The common run of people cannot all be led to higher things. Hence it is necessary to limit membership and exclude whoever would be satisfied with what is ordinary.

One has often to take a stand and be firm in this, especially where, as usually happens, to be a Sodalist brings with it a certain social or religious distinction. Many will wish to join for nothing but to gain this distinction.

The exclusiveness we are speaking of here is not one of class, or of wealth, or of worldly position, or of dress; but only of zeal for Our Lady and her better imitation.

There are, it is true, Sodalities in which this principle is neglected, or not much urged. But they never do the good work which they could and would if they kept this characteristic. A story is in place here, from the life of one of our fellow Sodalists, St. John Baptist de Rossi.

Pope Benedict XIV. had been himself a member of the First Primary Sodality of the Roman College and was so charmed with the fruits of the Sodality that he expressed a wish that all the boys in the college should belong to one. It was done as the Holy Father desired. But, contrary to his wish and intention, the effect was ruinous. There was no longer that emulation in goodness, that distinction given to piety and merit, and that potent factor in human life — good example received from those who are thought superior. All ambition in holiness was destroyed.

The fathers of the College soon perceived the disastrous change affairs had taken. What did they do? They resumed the old idea, and put it

in force even under the changed conditions. They established a *Sodality within the Sodality* and called it *Limited.* The members of the *Limited* thus became the real Sodalists — and all was well. St. John Baptist de Rossi was one of the most fervent of these, as another of our Sodalists, St. Leonard of Port Maurice, had been before him.

The moral of this story is: If a Sodality is not restricted to such as aim at something more than ordinary goodness, the one in charge should gradually eliminate the unwilling. If he cannot do that, then he could, as has often been done before, form a separate *inner body.* He could make them the apple of his eye, and labor, with our Blessed Lady's help, to render them all that is good and fine in Catholic life. He could bring them up to the highest perfection of the Rule; have them edify all by often receiving the Sacraments, by practising holy Meditation and the two Examens, and by hearing Mass daily. Their example, he may be sure, will be followed by others and he will gradually come to have a sufficiently large number of Sodalists worthy of the name, and all fervent. Then will he have a real Sodality. Meanwhile, he is in charge of an association of Catholics that have connection, indeed, canonically, with a grand system in the Church, but they are not — let us be convinced of it — they are not a Sodality of Our Lady in the proper sense. They are not such as the Rule prescribes they

should be and history shows true Sodalists are and have been everywhere and always.

It was said above that the exclusiveness so essential for a Sodality's well-being is not one of class. There is, however, a separateness even of class which does service for the end proposed. It is the separateness which pertains to a body of the same age, or of the same belongings — say, to a Sodality of young ladies. To keep up such a body and conduct it successfully, one must admit into it none but young ladies — girls will not do, nor will older women. The same applies to a young men's Sodality, to a boys' Sodality, to a senior college Sodality, to the various grades of school and parish Sodalities, etc.

This kind of exclusiveness is found to be important everywhere and in all cases. The reason is not far to seek. Members of a Sodality naturally meet one another and must mingle together, not in regular meetings only, but in going to church or chapel and returning, and in the many ways in which the members come together for charitable purposes — even in the entertainments which they have from time to time. Now, people cannot be expected to meet socially that are not of about the same age, or of about the same condition in life. One must be careful, then, not to make a Sodality too much of an *omnibus*.

If one has such a society on his hands, could not one divide it into its constituent elements?

A little increase of labor on the Director's part would enable him to conduct two Sodalities or more, all successful, in place of the one he now has, with its elements too heterogeneous for a common management.

The Kind of Members

The Director will find it impossible to keep his Sodality select, if he is not careful in admitting members. In most Sodalities the first step towards admission is taken by him; let him be on his guard, then, and look into the character of the applicant before he passes a favorable judgment. He should be sure that the person understands what it means to belong to a Sodality, and sincerely wishes to honor Our Lady and to lead, as a Sodalist, a life of more than ordinary goodness.

It is best to adopt some cautious plan even about members of other Sodalities that apply — it would be found well, usually, to subject them also to careful study and probation before pronouncing for their admission to the Sodality. Such a practice exists in many places and produces good results. We have known cases where even high officials of the Council of another Sodality were kept waiting a whole year.

Sometimes, however, on the contrary, there are very desirable persons who are loath to enter. The Director should not wait to be asked by

them, but do what he can to draw them to the Sodality, for Our Lady's honor. Excellence is what he wants: if he can get it for the asking, let him ask. He should advise, then, and urge such people to become Sodalists. Frequently enough, they have a false idea of what a Sodality is. The Director could take occasion of a sermon, or of some public speech, to explain or have explained clearly and attractively what the Sodalist is and aims at being. He could follow up public appeal with private invitation — always, however, letting it be clear that the honor is conferred by the Sodality in receiving, not by the candidate in applying.

In other cases, though a possible candidate is not just now fit to be admitted, the one in charge sees the step will be profitable after a while. Let him have a talk with the person; suggest improvement along certain lines; hold out the hope of future admission. Much good has often resulted from such a course of action and excellent Sodalists have been formed by it.

Finally, the members of a Sodality should be the best and ablest of their class. Nothing "*goody-goody*" will do. A solid, strong devotion, sturdy character, marked ability, make the best Sodalist. Popularity is a desirable quality. Virtue should be made respectable and attractive by the very kind of people admitted.

The Number

How many members should there be in a Sodality? Much depends on circumstances.

A large number is hard to manage. To get the best results, the one in charge must know each member personally and have to do frequently with each one.

In many boarding schools the one in charge of the Sodality is a kind of spiritual guide of the Sodalists. This supposes that the number there shall never be large.

Perhaps one might say that fifty or seventy-five is the best number in a large school. This is enough for the full force of good example, and is not too many to manage successfully. In smaller schools, a much smaller number has often been found sufficient for thoroughly good work. Perhaps one pupil in three or four would be a fair proportion in all schools.

In a parish, it may be difficult to limit a Sodality to as few as seventy-five; there may be many candidates, all worthy and all desirable. The plan, then, will be to receive them all and do the best one can by each — always keeping the distinction of ages and, usually, of classes also.

An expedient, useful under all circumstances, is what is called a *Waiting List*. The approved candidates, indeed, belong to this, but nothing prevents the Director having always some that are

not so far advanced as even they. Of course, the principle involved is evident: make a thing hard to get and every one will want it and labor for it.

The tendency of human nature to strive for what is not easy to get is utilized in another way in some Sodalities. They are *limited* as to number of members. We know of a school where no more than fifty are admitted to the Sodality. The result is excellent. The Sodalists are looked up to and somewhat envied by outsiders, and are themselves continually on their mettle, to avoid being excluded from the body.

The Inner Circle

In any Sodality that has a large membership, it is helpful to maintain an *Inner Circle.* This was recommended to Directors by the Congress of Sodalities held at Rome in 1904, and is a most useful device.

Neither is there any need of the Sodality being very large: the *Inner Circle* could be, say, 20 out of 200, 8 or 10 out of 50, 4 or 5 out of 25.

These members should be the most fervent and most earnest Sodalists and should be keen for the highest Sodality aims. They should have their own separate meetings with exercises specially for them, other and higher than those of the general body of Sodalists. Their works of piety and charity should also belong to the better Catholic life. Suppose, for instance, the ordinary members

approach the Holy Table every week, the *Inner Circle* could go several times a week, or, better still, every day: the same of other exercises of the Catholic life.

It would be well, usually, to limit the number of members of the *Inner Circle*, and to require a good probation before admitting candidates.

The example of this body will be a powerful aid in building up the entire Sodality. Good works which the Director would wish to inaugurate would, naturally, be begun by them and spread to the whole body.

The *Inner Circle* need not be all officers of the Sodality, though they will ordinarily be the most desirable candidates.

The Director will, of course, not make the mistake of favoring in this special way a certain class of people that are characterless. What he wants is the most solid and respected section of his Sodality: the more solid and respected the better. They are the ones whose example will be weighty for good, and it is the powerful influence of good example given by those who are highly regarded that the Director is enlisting in Our Lady's better service.

Junior Sodalities

In colleges and convents, there is a Sodality for the older and more mature pupils, and in parishes there are usually several, all of the same grade, for those who may be considered grown

people. Besides these, — they may be called *Head* Sodalities, — there are nearly everywhere one or more Societies for the younger pupils, or for people in their teens. We speak of what are often called *St. Aloysius, Holy Angel,* and *Holy Infant,* or, in general, *Junior* Sodalities.

Now, the question may be asked, are these real Sodalities? The answer is perfectly clear — of course they are. They fulfil all the conditions and are, by supposition, duly aggregated to the First Primary. Indeed, the earliest college Sodalities were composed of pupils younger by several years than are many of those who go to make up these junior bodies.

It is a mistake, therefore, to treat them as outside the pale of Our Lady's Sodality.

But there are two other points to consider. The first is: Do the Rules of the older Sodalities apply to them? That depends: if they are suitable, yes. The junior Sodalities should have Rules adapted to their capabilities. We would, however, call attention to the fact — for fact we are convinced it is — that these younger people are often able for much more in the spiritual life than is proposed to them. It is hard to see why they also might not be trained to use mental prayer, for instance. At least, the easier kinds of such prayer are not beyond their powers.

As to all the canonical requirements, then, and as to the need of selectness and the effort for the

higher things of Catholic life according to their condition, junior Sodalities are on a par with the others. There is hardly anything said above that can be neglected in their case.

The other point is: Can these Sodalities be used as stepping stones to the others? Certainly, there is nothing to prevent a school or parish having an organization consisting of grades of this kind. It is, to be sure, not provided for in the Rule, but is by no means contrary to it. Hence, the custom exists and works excellently in some places we know of.

The grades meant are not merely differences in age: they are higher and higher requirements for membership. It is a distinction of this sort that separates the *Children of Mary* in most schools and in some parishes from the other Sodalities, a distinction that makes powerfully for goodness.

The lines that divide these various Sodalities will of course be settled according to the circumstances of place and persons.

Chapter IV

The Rule

Need

NO organization can live a vigorous and successful life without a Rule. Nor is it sufficient that a Rule should exist: it must be observed. In proportion to fidelity in its observance will the organization thrive. If this principle is true of all societies, it is particularly so of those that are religious in character, because of their being so largely in the spiritual order. These need the stimulus and the support which are found in uniformity, as they have to face and combat a mighty foe in human respect. Such a spiritual body is the Sodality of Our Lady. Let it be put down, therefore, as an axiom that if the Rule of a Sodality is not regarded and observed as sacrosanct, the association will not produce the good it ought.

Observance

It is not enough that the Director should himself do what the Rule prescribes: he must see that all, officers and members, fulfil it. His position is that of overseer, and he is responsible for those under him as well as for himself. He, then, is the guardian of the Rule. He should explain it — at least once a year. He should be con-

stantly referring to it and deciding in accordance with it. Needless to add, he must know it thoroughly. The first thing he should do on coming in charge, is to study the Rule and he should keep reading it always.

Different parts of the Rule are to be looked on differently. Many things in it are recommended only: the one in charge will use his discretion in urging them or not at any given time. One Director, indeed, suggests that the one in charge urge now one, now another point, meanwhile saying nothing of the others that are in the Rule. This variety of exhortation prevents monotony.

Let him not, however, reject easily or slight any point whatever. All have been set down after much consideration and prayer, and the word *recommended* has been sometimes used of exercises that are meant to be faithfully and always carried out, the word being used only to exclude any idea of serious *obligation.*

As to the portions of the Rule that are not merely recommended, the one in charge must observe them and have them observed as far as ever he can.

But let him not think he is obliged under pain of sin to enforce them. There is no such obligation in any item of the Rule. The most stringent prescription is that about the three essentials of valid admission. But even if the Director were to neglect them, he would not therefore be guilty

of sin: the candidates simply would not become members. The binding force of the Rule is strong enough without obligation under sin, for the love of our Blessed Mother is the motive. If that love is not powerful in the Director's heart and in those of his Sodalists, it is some other kind of association he is governing, but no Sodality of Our Lady.

Chapter V

Fraternal Union

Importance

IN a Sodality, fraternal union is a necessity. Without mutual love the society will not hold together and do the great work it is meant to do. One reason is that much of the efficacy of the body as a body depends on common exertion; this will be practically impossible without a fellow feeling among those concerned.

Another proof of the importance of this virtue, the practice of which is strongly urged in Sodality Rules, is the fact that the good done is based largely on the force of mutual example, the sense, namely, that the individual member is one of many, all of whom are aiming high and are zealous for the better things. Clearly, example is rendered vastly more powerful by coming from those whom we esteem and feel kindly towards.

Manifestations

Fraternal union shows itself in many ways. They may be summed up in one phrase: that all feel proud of the goodness and success of each of the others. In the way, then, of regarding one another, of speaking of one another, of dealing with one another, will fraternal charity be made manifest.

There are many occasions on which a member can do something or say a thing that will forward the interests or the reputation of his fellow members in business life, in society, with those who are ill disposed, etc.

But fraternal union will not be perfect nor lasting unless it is firmly rooted in the mind. The members of the Sodality must *think* highly of one another, if they are to speak and do things in their favor.

Things Opposed to Union

Among these, clearly first in importance is positive ill-will between members.

Next is selfishness of character, which would make the individual be wrapped up in himself and have no feeling for others and their interests.

Selfishness leads often to an unconscious contempt of those about one and to acts — little or great, conscious or not — that make friendly feeling almost impossible, except to heroic virtue.

Another danger — and a very serious one in all societies, especially of men — is what is called politics. We do not refer to only such politics as is concerned with public life. There is a political way of acting that is the mortal foe of true fraternal union. Unfortunately, the spirit sometimes even gets into Sodalities and leads members to aim at self-aggrandizement by means of these bodies.

Means of Fostering

It is the Director's plain duty to do all he can to keep up a good feeling among his Sodalists. Here are a few hints to aid him:

He should always speak well of every member, or at least never say a word against any one. It is remarkable how it helps a society of any kind for all to feel that its head is ever on the alert to say a good word for those in his charge. We have often noted in teachers the effect of such action upon their classes. It is the same principle here.

The Director will have many opportunities of doing little things for the members, either as a body or individually. Every kindly act he does tells for good on all the Sodality. Such things are told around and spread good feeling.

He should be careful to harbor no thought or sentiment hostile to the Sodality or any of its members. Such inward feelings are sure to show outwardly.

So much for the great means of binding all together — that of binding them to the Director.

Besides this, he can do much to prevent or to correct bad impressions made — as they, of course, will be made — by members on one another. A word of explanation, a suggestion that the motive was such and such a good one, etc., will help to remove suspicions and restore confidence and good will.

Let the Director be exceedingly vigilant as to the great evil we have mentioned above — political ways of acting among the members. Let him make it clear that no such thing will be suffered. If there is question of election to an office, he should simply not allow a name to be considered at all when the person has been guilty of this fault.

Sometimes, do what one may, bickerings and jealousies will arise between individual Sodalists, or between parties. The one in charge must do all he can to put down and crush out such wretched sources of dissension. They would soon bring the Sodality to an end as far as any solid good is concerned.

As a general help for union, the Director should often urge fraternal charity, explain how beautiful a virtue it is and tell how to practise it. There are so many things that aid: let him dwell upon each and tell how to employ it. Let him particularly insist on the means mentioned in the Rule, and among them specially on works of mercy to members that are ill, and let him see that what the Rule prescribes be fully and lovingly carried out in the true spirit of Christian charity.

Prayers for Dead Members

Another way of helping fraternal union is to make much of prayers and Masses said for the departed Sodalists. In addition to its intrinsic

worth, the influence that this loving duty faithfully performed has in fostering union among the members should not be forgotten. It seems to bind them together in some such way as a common sorrow does.

Chapter VI

Means of Keeping up Interest

Why Necessary

ANY association that exacts effort needs an incentive to perseverance.

The love of our glorious Queen and Mother is the great and essential one in this association, and the Director must be continually adding fuel to keep it fervent. Let him put occasions of self-sacrifice for Our Lady's sake in the way of his Sodalists, speak to them often of Our Lady's love and care for them, urge them to appeal to her in need, explain the teaching of holy Church about her prerogatives, etc., etc.

But it is well not to neglect external aid either, and even such as is got from innocent material things. We must take human nature as we find it and make its harmless leanings do service.

A few hints will be helpful.

Holidays, Picnics, and Excursions

An old expedient, but a very successful one. Here are some instances of what has been done in various places.

In a Jesuit College in the United States, a few years ago the Rev. Father Rector gave a full holiday to the entire school in honor of the Sodality.

A sister in a certain city arranged a picnic for her Sodalists in the following way. There was another house of her order fifteen miles away, where there was a flourishing Sodality. She got the necessary leave and invitation and with her girls paid a half-day's visit to their sister Sodalists.

Both parties were delighted, the entertainers and the entertained. Neither was the time passed in social enjoyment only. The girls joined in a common Sodality meeting in the open air and before Our Lady's statue. Hymns were sung and the Act of Consecration was recited. The visitors went home refreshed and edified by their little trip; the visited were proud of their new acquaintances and glad of the chance to do the honors of their convent home. Both were more enthusiastic Sodalists for the event.

At another convent, the Children of Mary were given an extra holiday and taken off on an excursion to a neighboring religious house not of the same order. The good Superior there treated them as Sodalists ought to be treated. On their return they were given dinner in the parlor — a most extraordinary privilege.

In another school, the Director got his youthful Sodalists together and made with them a pilgrimage to a shrine of Our Lady in the neighborhood. An account was written and published by one of the boys. It breathes the spirit of loving devotion to her whom the boys felt they had visited indeed.

We are constantly reading of pilgrimages made by people of all ages belonging to Sodalities.

In many parishes, a picnic is one of the regular attractions of the Sodality every year.

Such events, besides serving to keep up interest in the Sodality, can be made occasions of much devotion to Our Lady.

Distinctions

One will have to exercise his ingenuity here, if he has charge of a Sodality of grown people. One thing might be suggested for them, which is practised in some parishes — going to Holy Communion, on Sodality days, either before or after the rest of the people, and having a fixed place in the church reserved to them.

Another opportunity could be found in taking none but Sodalists for ushers in the church, or at least at the High Mass, or on the more solemn occasions.

A third could be not allowing any but Sodalists to be Promoters of the Apostleship of Prayer.

Still another, and a very proper distinction, would be that the Sodality should supply the members of the Altar Society.

Distinctions are, perhaps, easier to manage in colleges and convents. In one place we knew of, only Sodalists were allowed to serve Mass. In another, the boys used to wear a special button, differing somewhat for various grades in the

Sodality. It should be noted that many boys prefer not to have a *ribbon* to their medals when the ribbon is to go around the neck. A pin would often be better in this country.

In most convent schools where there are Children of Mary, they wear some mark of honor — a blue sash or some other ornament.

These and similar distinctions are highly prized by their possessors and keep up the *esprit de corps* which is so potent a factor at all stages of life.

It is well to have the distinctions belong to all alike, or at least be had by rotation among all if they cannot be always in every one's possession.

To prevent vanity, let it be clear in all such matters that the distinction is meant to set off the Sodality as such, and not so much the individual. The Director should try to make the members realize that it is the Sodality which brings them honor.

Another hint is, frequently to remind one's Sodality that the body they belong to includes the best and noblest that the Catholic Church produces. They are no mere association of fifty or a hundred men, or women, or boys, or girls: they are fellows with unnumbered able and distinguished men and women in all the walks of life. To the same society with them have belonged as many as 25,000,000 fervent souls during the 350 years of its existence; among them no fewer than sixteen

canonized Saints, besides many of the Blessed and of those declared Venerable by the Church.

To bring home to the members the honor there is in being a Sodalist, some Sodalities have what are called *Honorary Members.* One abroad includes as such two Cardinals, the Nuncio Apostolic, and eighteen Archbishops and Bishops. These dignitaries of the Church are members in full right, and the dates of their reception are recorded in the catalogue, but of course are not often able to attend meetings.

Again, if it is a school Sodality one has charge of, one must not make the mistake of letting one's Sodalists think the Sodality meeting a *part of the curriculum.* Nothing could be further from the purpose. Belonging to the Sodality and attendance at the meetings is a thing of their free choice. They should feel proud to be allowed to be members and to attend. One must never dream of inflicting a school punishment for any Sodality offence.

Privileges and Exemptions

Sodalists are in many places allowed precedence, or granted certain exemptions.

We have already called attention to the custom existing in some parishes of having Sodalists go to Holy Communion at a special time.

In some places, perhaps, it would serve to allow Sodalists to go to their seat at Mass without paying the customary fee at the door.

In a certain convent, none but Children of Mary are allowed to go shopping without a chaperon. In certain others, they take the nun's place in the class room or on the playground when she is absent.

In some Sodalities, it is the officers that are treated with special honor by the Pastor or the head of the school. The effect is the same as if all were so distinguished, as all the Sodalists realize it is a privilege of the Sodality. At a certain college, the Prefect has a most honorable privilege — that he is free to go and come as he chooses and is not subject to punishment. He can, of course, be deposed, but cannot be punished as long as he is in office. The manner of conferring this highly prized privilege made it still more honorable, for it was granted by the authority of the Reverend President of the University in a solemn academic meeting of the students, and in perpetuity.

In the matter of privileges and exemptions, each Sodality will have its own special possibilities and its own peculiar needs. The above are instances given by way of suggestion, but they could not all be copied in every place. Something, however, of this kind could be done everywhere to help on the good work.

In awarding individual privileges, let them be granted, as far as possible, to the hardest workers and the most zealous Sodalists.

It would help occasionally to have the recipients chosen by vote of the Sodality.

Another hint: the privilege or exemption granted need not be perpetual. Often, indeed, it is more effectual to assign it for a limited — and not a long — time, especially in schools.

Feasts

A feast has much to do with keeping up good will, even among those no longer children.

Nothing elaborate is necessary, nor anything very expensive. At Christmas time, or in May, or, best of all, on the patronal feast, a little ice cream and cake and fruit could be had. If one wishes, a literary feature can be added and the occasion can rise to the dignity of speeches and toasts.

Older people would relish a quiet smoke, or a social tea. Each Sodality according to the age and likings of the members.

The breakfast which is, in some places, taken in common after the Communion of the Annual Retreat, belongs under this head and helps to keep up interest in the Sodality.

In all such affairs it is better to admit none but Sodalists, though, in some cases, the Sodalists are proud to be able to bring a friend or two with them. If there are addresses, the presence of outsiders would help in some places: what is said would be repeated to more people and bring more prestige to the Sodality.

Entertainments

An occasional musicale, or a play, or a reading — for the Sodality only, or for the public under the Sodality's auspices — serves the purpose. Let it be understood, though, to be the Sodality's own work; let all the management be in the hands of the members, and their names appear in connection with the affair. If there is talent among the members, it helps to bring them out, rather than hire outside artists. The more distinctly a Sodality event it is, the better.

The Director should see to it that all such things are well done: otherwise, they would rather bring discredit on the Sodality.

Programs

When receptions into the Sodality take place, or when an entertainment is got up, or a feast, it is well to have a program printed. Let it be beautifully made, and let it contain the names of the Officers and Sodalists. The expense will be amply repaid.

If one is directing a school Sodality, let him encourage the pupils to send their programs home. Many parents have the good sense to reward materially the appearance of their child's name on such sheets.

For programs of this kind, a Sodality *seal* is useful. It is not expensive to have one made from

the Medal. A neat and well executed seal would be appreciated on note-paper, also. Sodalists in a boarding school would gladly pay the extra sum such paper would cost. In general, the seal would go well and lend dignity to anything the Director prints for the Sodality.

Notice in Newspapers

This is a great help, and with a little foresight can usually be managed. A Director will often have some one in his Sodality that can have a report published of its chief events. Let the account be of a kind to encourage the actual members and to draw others. It is well to have it written in as finished a style as possible — in a word, it should have the effect of making the members proud of their society.

If there is a paper or periodical connected with the institution where one is, one can utilize its columns for the same purpose.

Publication of Names of Officers and Members

A very old custom — indeed, a rule — in Sodalities is to have constantly posted up in some prominent place the list of members in good standing. The reception room, or one of the most frequented corridors of a school, or the porch of a church, or the parlor of the rectory, is a good place for this. As splendid a panel or frame as

one can procure could be set up and the names could appear there prominently.

Programs, etc., can be used for the same purpose. In all such publications, let the name of each member be given in the most honorable way that can be devised.

When the Sodality is written up for newspapers, the Director should see that the names be accurately given and correctly spelled.

There is a beautiful book printed by the Sodality of the *Ateneo* of Manila in which are published even *photographs* of the officers. We know of a society which used to record in this way annually all the actual members of the year. Records like this become very interesting and, indeed, precious in a short while.

By this means, or at least by ordinary print, the officers and members could be set down in the annual booklet got out — where it can be done — as a medium of communication with old members.

Church Functions

These are possible in every Sodality. They should be conducted on as grand a scale as possible.

Receptions should be held at Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. If that cannot be, at least the altar should be brilliantly lighted and tastefully decorated for them. Fine vestments also should be employed, the singing should be in ex-

cellent taste and perfectly executed and the ceremonies faultless and, in general, everything done to make the members realize their position as Sodalists.

The Installation of Officers, also, should be solemn. Perhaps in other places the Director could do something like what a certain Director did in a university in the United States: all of the officers that could wore cap and gown at the ceremony.

The services of a preacher of note could be secured for a solemn function occasionally. There are many devoted priests and able prelates who would be delighted to have a chance of doing something of the kind for Our Lady.

It is good to talk up such features beforehand and to refer to them afterwards with a certain pride.

It helps also to thank, in public even, the Sodalists who were concerned in any way with the success of these church functions.

Exhibition of Sodality Work

A common way of doing this is to print an account of what is accomplished in various lines by the members. Such, for instance, is the practice of the great Barcelona Sodality. The amount of collections made for the poor, the work done in visiting the sick, teaching Catechism, etc., is recorded in a book printed for circulation, within

and without the Sodality. Such a publication is most acceptable, not only to the present but also to the former active members.

A famous Sodality abroad prints every year a *diary* of its proceedings, which makes highly edifying reading.

A report of Sodality work is published from time to time in many of our parish calendars.

An excellent account of the kind meant is that of the great Quebec Sodality of men, which is found in the number of the Canadian *Messenger of the Sacred Heart* which was issued for the Jubilee of the Immaculate Conception.

Besides printed information, a Sodality might make a more or less public exhibit of some of the work it has done. This would be quite possible in the case of a society, for instance, that sews for the poor, or of an Altar Society composed of Sodalists.

Academies

In olden times, often, there were literary clubs attached to Sodalities, which had only Sodalists as members. To-day, also, there are academies of the kind in many places. Perhaps one could utilize this feature to foster interest. Is it possible, for instance, for the Sodalists to establish a Longfellow Society, or a Reading Circle? Perhaps a Dramatic Society could be managed, or a Debating Club, or an Art Club, or a Scientific

Society. Or the Director might find even a Sodality Magazine within his capabilities. Outlets like these for literary, scientific, and artistic talent give dignity to Sodalities and help enthusiasm.

Of course, not all the Sodalists could belong to a body of this kind, which is necessarily confined to the few who are specially gifted; but the good effect would reach all: every Sodalist would feel proud of connection, through the Sodality, with such a society.

The Mail

A final suggestion under the head of this chapter is the use of the mail for Sodality purposes. We refer to notifications of events by postal card or letter. The Sodality could have its own seal for such purposes. By the way, we repeat that it should be one they can feel proud of. The officers could be notified of Council meetings, all could be reminded of Communion days, etc. Outsiders also would be impressed by these communications.

Chapter VII

Finances

Self-Seeking

THE Director must make one thing perfectly clear, that he is not aiming at filling his pockets by means of the Sodality. Nothing would so much hinder its success before God. If there is any danger of a suspicion like that, let him simply refuse to accept from the Sodality anything whatever for himself.

Expenses

The expenses of the Sodality must be kept moderate. To be sure, some of the Sodalists have an abundance of spending money: but others are not so fortunate. Let not the latter be made to feel their inferiority. Besides, the expense might deprive the Sodality of very edifying members, who could not belong if the tax were heavy.

Contributions

On the other hand, the regular contribution — if there is one — should be fixed as to amount and be exacted with absolute accuracy. In no other way can the accounts be kept straight. Every one should be made to pay the sum determined and at the set time. Otherwise, the books will

always show deficits: and deficits in small sums are very hard to make up. Besides, regularity in such things helps the spirit of fervor.

Perhaps it would be better in some Sodalities to have the dues payable half-yearly. It would certainly save considerable bother and much attention to money matters. On the other hand, however, it would probably tax the members too much to pay in a lump sum, if the amount should be great.

In some places there are no regular dues, but, as at the collections taken up during Holy Mass, each one contributes at each meeting, or on certain feast days, what he pleases and without any one's knowing how much. This was the plan followed for some time at one of our American colleges and is in use in many other places.

But there is a distinct advantage in exacting set dues regularly: it brings home the fact that the Sodality is an organization and it strengthens the *esprit de corps*.

The Director should get the right from the Council and feel free to remit payment entirely in some cases, — when, for instance, a Sodalist is too poor, or is temporarily embarrassed. When he does this, he should not let the fact in any individual case be known to others. On the other hand, no deficit should appear in the books. Rather let the Director himself pay the amount that is against the member, or better still, have

a fund on which, as we have suggested above, he can draw for that purpose without being obliged to report what use he made of the money.

It is useful to keep a strict eye on the Treasurer's accounts. It is very easy for minute sums to get confused. Some Rules suppose that the books are in the Director's keeping; let him carry out this prescription faithfully. The Director should see to it also that the money that should be is actually on hand.

Again, it is better not to allow much at a time to be in the Treasurer's keeping, but to put it in a bank and reserve to oneself the right of drawing it, or — and this is much better — require the Prefect's signature besides the Treasurer's for that.

If the one in charge of the Sodality is cautious, he will save himself a great many anxieties on this head and remove many temptations from the path of Treasurers, who are sometimes weaker than they are known to be.

Published Accounts

A good plan is to publish from time to time — even in print — an account of all moneys received and disbursed. Such a proceeding naturally makes every Sodalist interested in the finances, and lets it be clearly seen that the one in charge is not using the funds for his own purposes.

The Right to Expend Money

It would be well, indeed it is a clear necessity, to have it plainly determined who has the right to appropriate Sodality money.

It would be useful, as we have said above, if the Director could be allowed to employ a certain amount in *charity*, without being obliged to report about it in detail.

Outside of this, it seems proper that ordinarily no one should have the disposal of Sodality money without the Council's consent. If the Council leaves the matter entirely in the Director's hands, as is practically the custom in some places, he should be very accurate and minute in the accounts he presents to the Council, barring the certain sum which, as we repeat, it would be well for him to have the right to give in charity without reporting the items.

Sodality Articles

It is worth considering whether, on the whole, it would not be better if the Sodality were to make a *present* to the new members of the Diploma, the Medal and the Manual, at the Reception.

The expense would be the same in the long run to the individual; or rather, it would be less heavy, because when the articles are bought in quantity they are cheaper, and the Sodality would buy them in quantity.

The custom that exists in many Sodalities of charging a large sum for these things, much more than they actually cost, has, indeed, its justification, as the new members understand, no doubt, that in paying so much they are but contributing to a common fund. But it must sometimes deter otherwise eligible candidates from applying, and it certainly embarrasses many for the time. It would make a much better impression simply to give these articles free of charge and pay for them out of the Sodality treasury. We have never heard of admission to the Sodality being granted just to get this initial fee; but is the thing impossible? It occurs in all sorts of other organizations.

There is, to be sure, another side of the question, which is this: People prize more highly what has cost them something.

But whatever plan is adopted, it must be kept unmistakably clear that the Sodality is not a money business and is not going to be conducted on sordid lines in any way whatever. At least in this society let us be, and keep ourselves, absolutely free from all that is miserly, grasping, and mean.

Chapter VIII

Choice and Treatment of Officers

Importance of the Matter

FERVOR in Sodalists and zeal and prudence in the Director are essentials, but they are not sufficient for success. A poor body of officers would be constantly in one's way. They might give bad example, or they might neglect their official duties. In either case, the one in charge would have uphill work. In a rightly constituted Sodality, each official bears a portion of the burden: it is not fair that that portion should come upon the Director. For instance, it would hamper the Director considerably to be obliged to keep the accounts, or to be recording the absentees. It is important, then, that each officer be fitted for the post occupied, and fulfil its duties perfectly.

Observance of the Rule for Election

As to elections, the Rule once adopted — whatever it be — should be observed accurately. It is a source of blessing to do as one ought, and if the Director follows what is prescribed, all will feel incited to do the same. It is seldom really profitable to modify a rule on the spur of the moment.

If there is nothing set down in the Rule, the Director will find it best to adopt the method which very long experience has consecrated. We refer to what we said above about the election of the three highest officers in this way: Three names, chosen by the Council, are proposed to the Sodality. The one who gets the largest vote becomes Prefect, the next, First Assistant, the last, Second Assistant. The other officers, as was also said above, are usually elected by the Council, or are appointed by the Director or the Prefect.

Yearly Elections

Some directors would prefer to retain the officers as long as they give satisfaction. The Director has the power to do so, if he likes, but the reasons must be good.

There is one advantage in yearly changes: they keep the Rules in force. Officers long in position frequently forget the Rules, or get careless about them.

Besides, a yearly change of officers leaves chance for all to be elected, and it helps much for all to feel they are so deeply concerned in the Sodality as to be really eligible for its offices.

A good time for the yearly election in schools — perhaps the same is true of all Sodalities — is a month or so before the end of the scholastic year. The month of May is a natural time. In this way, when the new year begins, the officers will

be fresh and fervent. Besides, a good choice is easier at the end of the scholastic year, as all then know one another well.

Choice of Candidates

In the choice which the one in charge makes, let him be careful to put up no candidate for any office, no matter how insignificant, that is not really and as far as he can see, fit for it and likely to advance the Sodality to our Blessed Mother's honor. It would, doubtless, be well, in most cases, for the Director to take advice in private as to the ones he thinks of proposing. It would be disastrous to make a mistake in a thing of so great importance.

The choice of candidates, however, usually belongs to the one in charge, and he should not allow voting for any one whom he has not proposed.

If he can, the Director should have as candidates for offices such as are not only *diligent, reliable* and *devout*, but also *popular*. It is hard to secure the combination in the same persons of all these qualities, but it has been done and the effect has always been remarkable. In a college in America some years ago two successive Prefects were so carefully chosen that they were recognized by all to be at once excellent in class work, leaders in sports and general favorites. Their election gave a great impetus to the Sodality.

Nothing helps so much as to have an excellent Prefect. The Prefect is constantly in the eye of the Sodality and gives example that cannot fail to be noted and to contribute to edification, or the reverse.

Qualities Necessary in Officers

Besides the qualities requisite for every officer — great love of Our Lady, zeal for the better things of Catholic life, distinct ability, trustworthiness and popularity — these are some that are called for in particular in the several positions to be filled:

Prefect. The Prefect should be one of the most exemplary and notable of the Sodalists, a good manager, affable, spiritual-minded, thoroughly alive to Sodality interests and well acquainted with the members. Usually it is bad policy to have a newcomer in the office, or one who is considerably younger than the rest, or who is from a lower condition in life. Besides being excellent, the Prefect should be recognized as such.

Assistants. The Assistants should have the same qualities as the Prefect, and should be persons who might with profit be elected to the highest office later on.

Secretary. The Secretary should be diligent and accurate, and businesslike and reliable.

Treasurer. The Treasurer must be conscientious and careful of details.

Instructor of Candidates. This office would be best filled by a former Prefect, as the person who fills it should be one to command respect. If there is no former Prefect available, it is well to have one of the most prominent and able Sodalists in the position.

Consultors. The Consultors should be devoted to the Sodality and its work, and should know the members well. They must be persons whom the rest can and do look up to.

Sacristans. One of these could be in training and could, therefore, be from among the younger members. The other should be already formed, and should be prompt and trustworthy.

Choir Master. The one in charge of the choir besides being a musician of some kind, should have considerable managerial ability.

Reader. The Reader must be well chosen.

First of all, he must be a person who can be relied on for promptness — in the Reader's case, this means he must be on hand some minutes before the hour set for meeting. In some places, such as colleges and convents, a bell is rung five minutes before the hour, to warn all to be in their places soon. The Reader would begin a minute or so later than that. The old custom — a custom which is embodied in some Rules — says the Reader begins as soon as a few are assembled. In some places the members begin to arrive a quarter of an hour or more ahead of the time

fixed; in this case, it is better to have the Reader always begin a fixed time — say ten minutes — before the hour.

Secondly, the Reader must have a clear, strong, and, if possible, sympathetic voice, but above all he must be perfectly intelligible throughout the meeting place.

Again, as is clear, a certain amount of education is a requisite for this office, because the audience must not be distracted by mispronunciation or wrong emphasis.

The Reader is prominently before the Sodality. Hence, it is important to have in this office one who is highly considered as a Sodalist. A former Prefect, or one who has filled a high office would be best.

Besides the above officers, the one in charge may have others chosen if he needs them.

A Librarian is necessary in some Sodalities, as every such body should have a library of at least spiritual books for the members.

In some Sodalities it is customary to assign each newcomer or candidate a friend and guide, who is called *Guardian Angel.* The duty of the *Angel* is to teach the customs and protect the person in his charge from bad companions.

The Election

Let anything like canvassing or political jobbery be banished. It can be prevented by having the

election held at a time and in a place where talking is not allowed, and by taking the vote of the Council for candidates proposed by the Director just before the Sodality meeting; in this way it will be impossible to know who are to be candidates.

Let the act be surrounded with a religious atmosphere. A proper and usual beginning is the *Veni Creator;* then could be given a brief address urging the necessity of candor and conscientiousness and showing how important good officers are. Next follows the election. About this the following hints may be serviceable and represents what is done in many Sodalities: —

Two Sodalists are chosen to count with the Director the votes cast. These two must not be candidates themselves for any of the highest offices.

If the process of counting the votes would take long, the *Office*, or the *Litany of Loretto*, could be recited during it.

When the count is completed, it is best to announce it immediately, and congratulate the members elected.

In some places, there is a kind of *special order* for the election meeting, but usually it is not necessary to omit the regular exercises: at most, they could be shortened a little. If the Prefect or the Secretary has the ballots ready before the meeting, and the Sodality is not a large one, the

whole election need not take over five or ten minutes. It will be remembered that the entire Sodality does not vote for any but the three highest offices, and that they cast but one ballot for all three.

Treatment of Officers

The office of the Prefect and other offices, as far as is possible, should be surrounded with distinction.

The Prefect and officers should be treated with evident confidence. It is well to defer to their opinion and let it be known to all by one's manner of acting that one trusts them.

The Director ought to manage little occasions for showing the officers special honor. Perhaps, he could arrange a little separate talk to them occasionally, or an excursion, or an entertainment of some kind. The glory of God will be helped by his going to this trouble.

Perhaps, it would be possible to have an *Inner Sodality* composed of the old officers and the new. They could aim at some higher work and could be the prime movers in projects for the general good.

Let no office be despised. To this it would help to choose sometimes for an office that does not admit to the Council a former Prefect, or some other high official. Indeed, as has been said, it would always be well to have such a

Sodalist in the position of Reader: the same is true of that of Choir Master.

Each officer must be allowed to fulfil the duties of the office and must not be interfered with unless it is absolutely necessary. It is so easy, when the Director is energetic and zealous, for him to be tempted to take all the work on himself. Now, that is bad in two ways: it burdens the Director too much and destroys the subordinates' interest in their duties.

Perhaps some officer is delinquent. The Director should not take the duties on himself, but speak kindly to the officer and urge the necessity of accurate fulfilment of duties. If the admonition fails to have the desired effect, perhaps it would be better to get the officer to resign and have him replaced: but this must be done without asperity, or any show of anger, and only after advice with the Prefect, or other officials.

The one in charge ought to know every officer well: without that, he will find it hard to govern them successfully.

Sodalities are frequently injured by the officers, or some of them, not giving good example. That should be corrected as soon as possible. A new election, of course, will make it possible, but the Director need not wait till then. He should do all he can in the meantime to remove the disedification, and get subordinates to be more careful to live up to their positions in the Sodality.

The Council

The meetings of the Council should take place once a month. The one in charge arranges with the Prefect what topics are to be discussed. The Director — at least in some Sodalities — does not preside at these meetings and in many cases would do well not even to be present. If he is absent, the Council will see that he wants their own sentiments to be expressed; if he is there, the Councillors may feel that he wishes them to shape their ideas to suit him. He will often find advice given in his absence very wise and profitable. Besides, it often happens that there are among the Sodalists feelings about something which have not come to the Director's notice. He will learn of them in this way.

The Director will understand, of course, that he is not obliged to follow the advice of the Council — though it is usually the wisest course to follow it — and that he may veto their decisions.

He should, however, use the veto power not at all, if he can avoid it. If there is something that he thinks is really important for Our Lady's honor, let him talk it up among the Councillors before he proposes it through the Prefect. In that way, the votes will usually be in favor of his project. If the vote is then against his plan, it is likely the plan is not for the best.

When the old officers are going out of office, it is helpful to praise them in public, if one can, for their fidelity and good example. This will encourage them, and give ambition to the new ones, and advance the whole Sodality.

Chapter IX

Exercises of Piety

Reminders

HE Exercises of Piety are clearly defined in most Rules.

The one in charge will find it necessary to remind the Sodality frequently of what is expected of them as to these exercises. He can do so by set exhortations from time to time, or by a word now and again in the course of conferences on other subjects. Either way will do, and each has its advantages. The set exhortation makes a strong impression, but the occasional hint keeps the matter more constantly in mind. A combination of the two methods would reach both ends.

It will also be necessary to explain how each Exercise of Piety is to be done to render it fruitful. It is not sufficient to do this once for all at the inception of a Sodality. Sodalists, like other people, forget. At least once a year, then, it will be necessary to give explanations of this kind. If the Director desires that the Rule should be observed in detail, he will find it imperative to insist particularly and often on such things as Meditation, Spiritual Reading, Daily Mass, the Particular Examen, Self-denial, Humility, and Frequent Com-

munion, suggesting aids, removing difficulties, encouraging, telling stories from his own experience, or from the lives of holy Sodalists and the Saints, how these practices of a devout life are to be carried on.

Practices Recommended in the Rule

The Exercises of Piety set down in the Rule are much more important than anything else in it — indeed, the personal perfection of the Sodalists is the fruit of them, and that is always more to be considered than any other object of the Sodality. Hence, it may be useful to propose here somewhat minute topics for exhortation in public or in private, and for those quiet chats which make so largely for individual sanctity. Many such points can be found in every good Sodality Manual; many more will of course occur to each and every Director. We mean to merely make suggestions.

Vocal Prayers

How to say — Various methods — Fruit to aim at. The Beads should be particularly explained — The history of the Rosary — Its efficacy — The way to help oneself to meditate while saying the beads.

The Offices of Our Lady, especially those in the Manual that is used, should be made intelligible to all.

General Examen

The Director should insist on the General Examen being made without fail every day. It is at once the easiest and the most essential of all the exercises recommended. Sickness need not hinder it; the daily duties of one's life should never be allowed to interfere with it. If a quarter of an hour cannot be given to it, five minutes can.

As to this exercise, the following points for talks will be helpful:

The method followed — Thanksgiving urged; especially for benefits lately received — Scrupulosity avoided in the examination proper; laxness also — Contrition the main thing — Motive to be as perfect as it can be got — Purpose of amendment definite and practical — Variety in the prayers of the Examen — Use of a written form for self-examination — Position to be taken at various parts — Keeping a Spiritual Diary.

Particular Examen

How to make it — What can be expected from it — What kind of a subject to take — Means for varying the practice — How to avoid tedium — What position to take during it — Examples of its utility — How the Saints used it — The predominant passion — How to attack the enemy in detail.

Mental Prayer

On this subject much instruction will be necessary, and the Director will have to repeat it frequently. All the methods ought to be explained in detail and practical illustrations should be given. It would be well to have something like a repetition of meditation occasionally, if it can be managed. Perhaps it would be possible on a regular meeting day, if the office is replaced by a Meditation. Some one might be called on to go over the Meditation after it is finished and tell how it went in his case.

A good Manual will contain a careful analysis of the exercise and the steps will be accurately marked. The Director can take this and explain them one by one. He should remember, above all, to make the explanation exceedingly *practical.*

It is well to urge the use of the *Three Methods of Prayer.* They are easier forms and would invite use when the more difficult methods would be too hard.

Spiritual Reading

We give below a list of books useful for reading in the meetings. These could be recommended for private reading also. Others could be added.

The Director should explain in what spirit Spiritual Reading should be made — How to begin — How useful it is to pause and ponder — Also, the

thing to aim at in this exercise — What kind of books to select — How much time to devote to it, etc.

Holy Mass

Many more Sodalists could hear Mass every day than actually do so, and of those who cannot hear it every day, many could do so several times a week. The Director should keep this means of sanctification before their minds.

In the instruction which he gives them from time to time, he should explain to them various ways of hearing Mass — by prayers for the various parts, by the words which Holy Mother Church puts in the mouth of her minister, by one kind or another of mental prayer, especially such as has reference to the Passion of Our Lord, by saying the Beads, or a portion of Our Lady's Office, by using the devotions preparatory to Communion, etc.

It would be useful to explain also the meaning of the ceremonies and the symbolism of the vestments, the lights, etc.

Again, in this connection, all that beautiful part of Theology is available which treats of the Blessed Sacrament as Sacrifice and as Sacrament.

Another topic here would be the doctrine of *intentions*.

Another, the benefits derived for all eternity from attendance at even one Holy Mass.

Another, the great impetrative power there is in Holy Mass.

Confession

This is a matter on which instruction is never amiss. The old as well as the young are glad to get it. It pleases and helps even those who have been excellently instructed already.

No detail is too minute to touch on. Here are some suggestions: —

Penance as a Sacrament, as a virtue — The Priest's part in the Sacrament — The essentials of what he does as Minister — Confession to a regular director.

The penitent's part will, naturally, need fuller treatment — Sin, what it is — When mortal, when venial — What one is obliged to confess, what is free — Advice about telling the things that are free — Bad confessions, how to make them good — Concealing sins — Telling lies in Confession — The examination of conscience — How to make it — Use of a prayer-book or not — What to do when in doubt — Scruples.

How to conduct oneself in the Confessional — Formula to use — What is of obligation in it, what not — Asking advice and having doubts solved — How to tell sins.

Penance and when to perform it — What obligation — If forgotten.

How often to go to Confession.

Holy Communion

The Sacrament — Its fruits — The Real Presence.

Remote preparation: Life of recollection and devotedness — Avoidance of all sin.

Proximate preparation: Prayers — Fasting — Meditation — Holy Mass — Visit to the Blessed Sacrament — Acts of self-denial.

During Holy Mass: Acts — Psalms — Kempis — Pious Meditations — Various methods of Prayer.

How to approach the Holy Table: Modesty — Reverence — Human respect — Holding the head — Putting out the tongue — Snapping — Moistening the Sacred Particle in the mouth and swallowing.

After Communion: Thanksgiving always and for some time — Prayers to say — Mentally or orally — With relish — Not too fast — Indulgences to gain — How — For whom.

How often should each Sodalist go to Holy Communion. The Director should make this point very explicit. Going as often only as ordinary Catholics do is not enough. Many Sodalists, no doubt, remain away from frequent and daily Communion because they do not know the correct doctrine.

General Confession

The correct doctrine on the subject — How often to make — How to prepare — Fruits.

The Sodalist Virtues

Each one should be explained in detail — Occasions of practising them should be mentioned — Means to acquire each — Sins against each.

All are important, but Diligence in the duties of one's state should be particularly urged, and Purity, and Humility.

The Director should give abundant illustrations of all the five virtues set down in *General Statutes* and urge and attract all the Sodalists to the practice of them in the higher degrees, and for solid supernatural motives.

In each Sodality, there will be certain points under these heads that will need urging. Let them be insisted on again and again.

High Aim

In all these matters one should, above all, impress on his Sodalists the fact that they are expected to *aim high* and to do better things and for more exalted motives than ordinary Catholics.

Apostolate of Example

Their example as Sodalists is to tell on all about them, for our Blessed Mother's greater honor and the glory of God. Each Sodalist, therefore, should be an apostle among friends and acquaintances. He should carry his apostolate into every-day life and make use of whatever means he has to make others advance in our Lord's holy service.

Let the Director remember that one of the most precious fruits of Sodality work has always been to further practical Catholicity by just this apostolate of word and example. Let him not suffer his Sodality to fail of so desirable an effect, especially in these days, when lukewarm, timorous and half-hearted Catholics are so common.

Knowledge of All

In order to make his exhortations and guidance practical, the Director must understand his Sodalists' dispositions, trials, temptations, degree of education, condition in life, surroundings, antecedents, prospects, opportunities — in one word, he must know them as well as if he were one of them. And he must know each one in particular and be interested in each. Only so can he hope to exercise the influence which belongs to his office.

Private Talks

Among the works of piety, may be included the Director's private talks with the members. These give him the opportunity of doing a vast deal for the individual soul which he cannot do by his public appeals. It is not necessary and, indeed, it is usually not well to prolong these conversations to a great length, nor is it possible in many cases, but frequent brief chats must come into one's plans. Let a time be set for it, if the Director likes, and

let him, at the time, be where the chats will be convenient and easy.

On this subject, the following story is in place.

A celebrated and most successful religious superior was once engaged in conversation with a visitor at the community dinner. The visitor said: *It must be a very difficult thing to manage so large a number of different characters as your Reverence has here.* The superior paused a moment and then impressively replied: *Yes: the hard thing is to make each one think he is the one.* So must the Director do, make each Sodalist feel as if he is interested in him or her more than in all the rest.

Other Exercises of Piety

In addition to what is set down in the Rule, it may be well to suggest a few other things regarding the subject of this chapter.

Bona Mors Association

It is very easy to get one's Sodalists to be members of this body and it is well worth while. The Director has but to write to the Father General of the Society of Jesus, as was mentioned in a former chapter. Besides the other advantages, membership in the *Bona Mors* association would directly help the Sodality work by lending a zest to the Preparation for Death, in the monthly Recollection.

Triduums

One of these comes by Rule before the reception of members into the Sodality. Let the triduum be serious, but not too formal. Silence on the last day would be good.

Other triduums might be made with fruit before the chief feasts of Our Lady. A little extra devotion of some kind — a visit to Our Lady's statue, the singing of the Litany, a meditation — would do each day, and silence would not be necessary.

Penances for Lent

Some Sodalists make out a list of penances they propose to do during Lent and show it to the one in charge of the Sodality. The practice encourages self-denial and is good.

The Director will need sometimes to restrain his Sodalists in this matter, as they may easily, out of their fervor, be inclined to exceed. It is well, therefore, that he should have some control of the penances undertaken.

A word of reminder and advice about this holy practice is useful and should be given before Lent and before such times as a Retreat. It must never become unfashionable for the devout to practise bodily penance and mortification.

Chapter X

Chapel and Belongings

Chapel

THE Sodality Chapel should be its own proper possession, if that can be managed, and should be used for nothing else. This is quite a common custom abroad. We have seen several chapels of this kind in foreign colleges; they were strictly reserved for the Sodalists. The same is done in some places in this country, and in a certain convent in the East there is an oratory into which none but Sodalists are allowed to enter.

One need not be told how great an impression this custom makes on the Sodalists. They are reminded by the very place of meeting that they are to be a select and separate body.

Of course, not every Director could have such a separate chapel, but it might be possible to reserve a chapel or the church for the time of the Sodality meeting or Mass, and at that hour admit none but Sodalists.

The meetings, however, do not always take place in a church or chapel, nor is it necessary that they should. The earliest meeting-place of the First Primary was a class-room.

Whatever room or chapel is used for the Sodality meetings should be as perfect as possible in all

details. There must be nothing offensive of any kind — as far as can be, even taste should be fully met. The meeting place should be one that all will be glad to resort to. The altar, particularly, must be attractive and excellently kept. Of course the necessary work will be done by the Sacristans. We know of a Sodality chapel in a College of Nobles abroad where the Sacristans — both noblemen by birth — sweep the floor and dust, etc. If circumstances made that degree of care impossible, the Sacristans should at least oversee the work. As to the altar, they should do everything, if it would not take too much time.

There should be an abundance of altar furniture, and all in first-class order.

The expenses of the Sodality chapel should be borne by the Sodality.

Belongings

Under this head we may mention manuals, medals, ribbons, diplomas, and the like. None of these should be allowed to get out of repair. The best plan is for each one to have and keep his own articles of this kind and to be required to have them in good condition. Books with broken backs, soiled medals, unsightly ribbons — these and similar things should be allowed no quarter. If it is worth while having such helps to devotion, it is worth while having them neat.

In the first choice of a manual, a medal, and a diploma, the Director and the Council should not be satisfied with any but the best. It is to Our Lady's honor to have Sodality belongings as elegant as possible. Besides, when a Sodalist has a fine thing, he will feel incited to care for it as he should.

The chief danger here is in those Sodalities which own manuals, etc., as a body. Almost without fail, the articles in this case will soon be shabby. The reason is simple: no one feels responsible.

Chapter XI

Seats at Meetings

Fixed Places

A FEW years ago, a Sodalist from the United States was spending a portion of his vacation in Mexico. Being in a certain city on a holy day of obligation and wishing to hear Mass at nine o'clock, he went to a neighboring church. He found it was a Sodality Mass. Much objection was made to his entering at all. He assured the porter, however, that he was a Sodalist and was finally admitted, though not to the ordinary benches. These were reserved for the members, each of whom took his place as he came in.

It conduces to good order to have each Sodalist assigned a fixed place in the chapel or church.

The seats could be determined at the beginning of the year. A neat, printed card would do for the purpose and would, besides, serve as a list of active members.

The advantage of fixed seats is that it makes easier the Secretary's task of recording absentees from meetings and from General Communions. It should, therefore, fall to him to attend to the matter. Without some such expedient in a large Sodality an accurate account cannot be kept of absentees.

The seats might be distributed so that each might have his place determined by the date of his admission to the Sodality. A certain honor would thus accrue to the older members, which would help for general Sodality purposes.

The Director

The Director might take his position in the Sanctuary, or just outside of the railing, or at the end of the chapel or church, according as he presides or not at the meetings.

The Officers

The Officers should have some distinction of place and be either in the front or at the rear. The Prefect and Assistants had better be in the front. In some colleges, the Prefect has a prie-dieu and chair in the middle of the Sanctuary; the Assistants, prie-dieus and chairs beside the Prefect. This arrangement is a good one. In the case of Sodalities of girls or women, a correspondingly prominent place would be just outside the altar railing.

The Secretary will be best put at the back, to note absentees. If the Consultors help in this, they could be distributed so as to have each a certain number of seats in easy view.

If it is possible and convenient, there might be a specially honorable chair for each of the officers. The places they would occupy by right of seniority

could be left vacant during their incumbency of an office.

It is customary in some Sodalities to adorn the officers' chairs or kneeling benches with precious cloths on certain days.

Chapter XII

Meetings

How Often

THE original custom was to have a meeting of the Sodality once a week and, besides, on the feasts of Our Lady. In some places the custom has sprung up of holding but one meeting a month. This is much to be deplored. Once a month is not frequent enough for all the good the Sodality is expected to do. If there is such a custom where one is, one should change it as soon as one prudently can and fall in line with ordinary Sodalities. Once a week is the correct thing. Without meetings as often as that a Director cannot keep his eye on the spiritual progress of his charge.

If, on the day assigned, it is not possible to have a meeting, let it be transferred, if it can be done, to another day. If a Director cannot have the full time let him shorten it, but not *omit* any regular meeting without absolute necessity. In this matter, as in so many others, interest flags when an interruption occurs. For the same reason the Director should consider well before he suffers his Sodality to have no meeting during the summer months. Such a course too often necessitates

beginning anew every year. Even in schools we believe the members could be got together at least occasionally during vacation. This is a matter particularly worth looking into, as it is at this time of the year that most Sodalists need special help to keep up to their ideals.

The Day and the Hour

On what day should the meeting be held? The old custom was Sunday, and Sunday will be best still in some places. The hour in the old times was often just before Mass, and so it is determined in some Rules. This hour does not suit nowadays in the majority of places; a better time is the afternoon or evening of Sunday, or the evening of some other day.

Naturally the one in charge will choose a day and hour that is, as far as possible, convenient for all.

We would make one suggestion with regard to school Sodalities; let it not be at a time when attendance at the meeting would involve loss of class or of study hours. The Sodality is something extra, and should not interfere with the regular order. Some members might object to their free time being absorbed — but it is very questionable whether the Sodality would not be better off without them. It is an honor to attend meetings; some sacrifice ought to be

expected. Bearing some inconvenience is a guarantee of the sincerity of their love of Our Blessed Mother.

Regularity in Attendance

The Director must insist on constant, regular attendance and not permit his Sodalists to remain away. If he is firm in the beginning, they will be faithful later on without his having to bother. To bring about regularity the Secretary must be kept to the task of recording all absentees, and the Director should see to them himself in person. Let that be one of his weekly duties. Suspensions and even expulsion should be kept before delinquents as a possible effect of absence.

The necessity of strictness on this head must be evident to all. Public edification requires constant full attendance. The Director is more earnest when he is conscious that all his flock is listening to him. Mutual example is strengthened — and so on ; there are many reasons why absence should scarcely ever be suffered to go unremarked and unreprehended. Sometimes a member will ask *permission* to absent himself. The answer should be given him which a certain American Director gave to a like petitioner. *Leave? Why, no leave is necessary. You are not obliged to be present. It is an honor to be allowed to be a Sodalist at all. It is a question of your love for God's Holy Mother.*

What is here said of attendance at meetings of the Sodality applies with equal force to that at Council meetings and to the keeping of all Sodality engagements. Dilatoriness, tardiness, absence, unwillingness have no place in the Sodalist's life when there is a Sodality interest at stake.

Chapter XIII

Exercises at the Regular Meeting

I. Reading

Advantages

THE exercises and their order are, of course, set down in the Ceremonial. If they are the same as they have often been throughout the history of the Sodality, the meeting begins with reading, as has been said.

The Reader does not wait until the minute assigned for the beginning of the meeting. People usually straggle in by ones and twos and threes. When a few are assembled, the reading begins.

There are distinct advantages in having reading at this time. Every one has remarked the lolling and curious study of their neighbors on the part of early comers to Mass. There is nothing to keep their attention. The reading supplies the need in the Sodality Meeting. Any Director, who has had a book read thus at the beginning of a meeting knows that it is most attentively listened to. In this way no time is lost of the half-hour or three-quarters spent in the exercises.

Preparation

It would be well to have the reading prepared beforehand. The Director could choose the book

and set the passage some days, or at least, long enough ahead to give a chance for the Reader to have gone carefully through it. A natural and easy way would be to assign the matter at the end of a meeting for the next: this would give the Reader a whole week.

Whole Books Through, or Passages Here and There?

Would it be well to read the same book continuously? If it is proper for one's purpose and remains interesting to the Sodality, — yes; if either of these conditions is not fulfilled, — decidedly, no. One cannot afford to be losing time with what is read; and in either of these cases one would be losing time. In most instances, then, the Director would find that it is not good to have an ascetical book, or even a life of a Saint, read from cover to cover. There are, however, exceptions, some books being profitable and attractive throughout. But in general, it is better to choose a distinct passage for each time, whether from the book used last time or from a new one.

The passage so chosen must be complete in itself; at least, it must not presuppose anything which the hearers have not already learned.

There is no need of the interest in the passage being *exhausted* when the reading stops. It would rather be good to leave a taste for more and would incite to further reading in private, or give zest for

this exercise next time. It would have the effect, namely, of the *To be continued in our next*, which often disappointingly interrupts a story, but is so useful to the publisher.

What Kind of Reading Matter?

What books to read? It depends on the age, the education, the peculiar circumstances, of the Sodalists, and the one in charge must pick and choose accordingly. Some books and passages would be better for certain times in the year — some, for instance, for the time just before, or just after, the Annual Retreat, some for Lent, some for Advent. Some books would suit best the General Communion Day. What is aimed at is, of course, the spiritual profit of the Sodalists then and there.

Nothing should be assigned by the Director to be read until he has read it himself. And he should not hesitate to *cut* the text, that is, mark out phrases, or lines, or pages that would not suit. It is easy afterwards to erase such marks if they are made with a pencil.

It would be well to keep a record of passages read, and of the impression they made; they could be used again later.

How long?

The Reader goes on until the Director gives the sign to discontinue. This can be done by the Di-

rector's rising, or by his taking his usual place, or by his having put a mark to be reached in the book or having set a time to be filled out.

It will be found well to have generally about *ten minutes* of reading. That amount will not tire, and if the book and passage are well chosen, it will be listened to that long with avidity.

What Books?

Naturally, the most important book to read from is the *Manual*, if it is a good one. There are three parts of this to read. The first is the *Rules*. These must be read several times a year, if it is expected that the members will make use of them for their lives, as they ought.

Some prefer to spend the whole of the reading time of some meeting on the Rules and finish at one sitting. Perhaps, it would be better — as it would make more impression — to read a portion at several meetings, say one fourth of the whole, or, perhaps better still, a part of them each time. Any of these ways would reach the end aimed at.

Next to the Rules, the most important matter in the Manual are the *Instructions*. If the one in charge purposes giving an explanation of some point in the Sodalist's life, it would be an excellent preparation to have the part of the Manual read beforehand which treats of the subject. The Director could then use the Instruction for his text. This would be a good plan in other books also.

After the Rules and Instructions, it would be well to have the part on the *History* and the *Nature of the Sodality*, its *Indulgences*, etc., read.

Next to the Manual, the best book for reading is "Kempis on the Imitation of Christ." Perhaps one would find it well to do as a certain Director used to do, and have a chapter, or a portion of a chapter, read at each meeting, either before the other reading, or, better, at the end of it.

We would recommend particularly the edition which copies the rhythm of the original. This must not, however, be confused with a non-Catholic translation of the same kind.

"Kempis" should be read slowly and time be given for spiritual relish of the food he affords.

Here is a list of some other books which would help one to choose profitable and interesting reading, should one's own stock run out.

The Holy Bible: Gospels — Epistles — Old Testament.

Especially in the parts that are narrative.

The Bible could be read in the plain text, or in a Harmony combining the texts of various sacred authors.

Rodriguez — "Christian Perfection."

The usual reading book of the devout, whether religious or people in the world. Solid in doctrine, interesting in illustration. Rodriguez drank deep at the fountain of the Fathers of the Church and the great ascetical writers who preceded him. A new and improved edition of this masterpiece will shortly be available.

Mother Loyola — "First Communion," — "Child of God"; "Coram Sanctissimo," "Hail Full of Grace"; "Welcome"; "Holy Communion"; "Confession and Communion"; "Forgive us Our Trespasses"; "Soldier of Christ."

All the books of Mother Loyola are precious for Sodality reading. They are easy to follow, propose a high grade of spirituality, and are most entertaining. They please the old and the young alike.

Scupoli — "Spiritual Combat."

A book very dear to St. Francis de Sales, our fellow Sodalist.

St. Francis de Sales — "Devout Life"; "Love of God"; "Letters to People in the World."

These books have a charm all their own: St. Francis de Sales is so practical and so full of unction and so moderate. His illustrations are drawn from the most ordinary things and are very apt. He is particularly fond of nature. St. Francis de Sales, it will be remembered, is a Doctor of the Church.

Garesché — "Little Imperfections."

Boudreaux — "God our Father"; "Happiness of Heaven."

Two most consoling and instructive books.

De Lehen — "Way of Interior Peace."

Faber — "Spiritual Conferences"; "Blessed Sacrament"; "Creator and Creature"; "Growth in Holiness"; "Bethlehem"; "All for Jesus"; "Precious Blood." "May Readings from Father Faber."

Father Faber's books are written mostly in an effective style that is very taking.

Not every page in these volumes could be understood when read in public, being too deeply theological. There are, however, plenty of passages of sufficient length to make excellent reading for the Sodality.

Grou — "Interior of Jesus and Mary."

Gallwey — "Watches of the Passion."

Guéranger — "Liturgical Year."

Contains many beautiful and instructive passages, peculiarly fitted for special times in the year.

Doyle — "Lectures to Boys."

Excellent short moral talks adapted to college boys. The change of a word here and there would make them do perfectly for convent girls as well.

Newman — "Present Position."

Select portions would be useful for giving a clear idea of Protestantism, as seen by one that knew it thoroughly.

Damanet — "Choice of a State of Life."

This is the standard authority on the subject, being replete with the wisdom of the Fathers and the Theologians of the Church.

Rossignoli — "Choice of a State of Life."

Roothaan — "Meditation."

Egger — "The Devout Guide for Catholics in Service."

Lasance — "The Catholic Girl's Guide."

Madame Cecilia — "Home Truths for Mary's Children"; "More Home Truths"; "Short Spiritual Readings."

"Mary the Queen."

Lucas — "In the Morning of Life."

A book of talks to college boys.

"History of the Sodalities of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

St. Bonaventure — "Life of Christ."

St. Augustine — "Confessions."

Full of most interesting passages.

"Lives of the Saints."

It would be well to read in the meetings something of the life of each Sodality Saint as his feast comes in the year.

Coleridge, or Bartoli — "St. Francis Xavier."
"Autobiography of St. Teresa."
Goldie — "St. Stanislas"; "St. Berchmans."
Ornsby, or de Margerie — "St. Francis de Sales."
Thompson — "St. Charles Borromeo."
Genelli, or Bartoli — "St. Ignatius Loyola."
Monnin — "Curé of Ars."
"Maidens of Hallowed Names."
Tickell — "Blessed Margaret Mary."
Coetlosquet — "Theodore Wibaux."
Daniel — "Alexis Clerc."
O'Meara — "Ozanam."
Pious Accounts of Catholic Missions.
Pious Articles from Catholic Magazines.

II. Invocation of the Holy Ghost

Its Place and Purpose

This, like the Reading, is an ancient custom of the Sodality.

In some Sodalities the Invocation comes before the Reading. It is better, however, to put it here in order to make use of the Reading, according to the more ancient usage, to entertain the members immediately on their arrival.

It would take too long to recite or sing the entire *Veni Creator;* two stanzas are sufficient.

They can be sung — as a solo, or as a chorus — or they can be recited alternately. Whichever plan is adopted, the hymn, verse, and prayer should be made impressive.

The purpose of the Invocation is to beg the grace of the Holy Spirit for the proper and fruitful saying of the Office of Our Lady and for the fruitfulness of the instruction which is to follow it. Without that grace, neither can be rightly done. Let us, then, make our prayer for it humble and earnest and devout.

III. Office

Which of the Offices?

After the Invocation of the Holy Ghost comes the Office.

And first of all, which Office should be said?

There is no need of saying the same always.

For ordinary occasions one would probably prefer the *Little Office of the Immaculate Conception;* this because of a devotion which is so dear to us on this side of the water — and, indeed, throughout the world — and because of the beauty of the Office itself.

During November, a part of the Office of the Dead would naturally be recited at all the meetings. The Lauds would probably be preferred.

The choice rests with the one in charge as to

this and as to all other devotions of the regular meetings.

Directions for Saying

The Office should be made a real prayer. Hence, let it not be read too rapidly. Neither, on the other hand, must it drag. Just how rapidly it should be gone through depends partly on the age and tastes of the Sodality. Older people would like to linger somewhat and relish the exceedingly devotional words.

On feast days the Director might find it helpful to have portions of the Office *sung*. This could be done at ordinary meetings, too, if one wished. Congregational singing would usually suit better than solos, or even choir singing.

Needless to add, music, if used, should always be strictly ecclesiastical.

A certain amount of singing is liked by Sodalists of all kinds; a taste which the Director will do well to utilize. Let him see to it that wherever any portion is sung, it is excellently rendered.

What may be Substituted

In place of the Office the Beads might be said. There is a sort of chant for this which is very pleasing, and may be used if circumstances are propitious.

Another substitute for the Office could be the *Litany of Loretto*, sung or recited.

On the day on which the *Monthly Patrons* are distributed — where that custom exists — the Litany of the Saints is said or sung, in many Sodalities.

Another substitute for the Office at regular meetings would be a pious *meditation*, given, for instance, by the Director and made by the members. The Director could give *points*, then leave the Sodalists to their own thoughts, or he could make the meditation with them, speaking very slowly.

IV. Conference

Who is to Give It?

This is the part of the meeting in which the Director's chief work is done — and exceedingly important work it is.

The Director himself — or the Directress, where a nun is the actual manager — will ordinarily give the Conference. It is customary, however, in some Sodalities to invite an outsider — a Bishop or a priest — to address the body. On state occasions, this is well — *occasionally*. Perhaps even members of the Sodality might be used in this way sometimes.

The Director's Position

First of all, then, what position shall the speaker take? Of course, he will be where all can see him, and where he can see all. It goes without

saying that the Sodalists should be accustomed to keep their eyes on the one addressing them. It is the natural way of listening to a speaker, and makes considerably for attention.

Some prefer to take a standing position, when talking to their Sodality. But there is much in favor of being *seated*. It gives the talk a less formal appearance, and renders it less of a sermon.

Style of Conference

The one in charge will make much more impression, and do infinitely more good, if his addresses to the Sodalists are direct and simple. Let him speak to them in the second person, and let him not mind about fancy periods and recondite or brilliant ideas.

Here, he is aiming at improving souls, not at displaying oratorical or intellectual powers. He understands the souls of the people before him and is keenly alive to their interests: it is for their good he is speaking, not for his own glory. Plain talking will tell more for the purpose than any amount of rhetorical flourish. Everybody is sharp enough to see through an attempt at self-exhibition and is prompt in despising it.

Some Points to Attend to

It is well to note particularly the following points: —

One must not beat the air. Discourses on the loveliness of some virtue may be fine literature, but they are not apostolic. The matter must come home to the hearers and be of use to them and practical here and now. The one in charge finds such and such a Sodality virtue wanting in them; let him urge that. A custom is growing up among a number of too frequently going to the theatre; let him condemn that. Some, he hears, are neglecting the Sacraments — and so on, according to circumstances.

What he says must be said for all present. He must not be content with helping two or three of the more advanced. It is better to talk to them privately if there is any topic particularly needful for them. Neither, on the other hand, must he make the mistake of reprehending all for what a few have done.

Let him talk simply. If the one in charge has a literary turn, let him use it, but let the style always be simple, and always as clear as crystal. It should be impossible for any one to misunderstand and not to catch the meaning.

He should use illustrations. They can be taken from the every-day life of the Sodalists. In college, athletic games and class allusions; in convent, studies, dress and female employments; in men's Sodalities, business life, political happenings; in Sodalities of grown women, household matters, and other subjects of their conversation.

Perhaps, the one in charge could sometimes give a spiritual talk illustrated with *stereopticon* views, of Rome, the Holy Land, Fabiola, some great Cathedral. Lantern slides can be got nowadays for almost any topic, and they make a talk immensely more effective. We knew a Master of Novices in a religious Order in Ireland who taught his novices their History, Geography, and even Catechism in this way, and with marked success.

A continuous course of instructions on one subject is not needed — and is often not profitable. Indeed, curiosity may sometimes be enlisted by leaving it uncertain what will be spoken of next, or the Director could break off in the midst of something that he sees is interesting, and so make use of the *To be continued in our next* device.

Previous reading by the Sodalists on the matter of the Conference helps sometimes. For that, it would be necessary to give notice what the subject will be, and it would help to indicate portions of the Manual, or of some other book, where the subject is treated.

Let the tone be always cheery and encouraging. The Sodalists are what they are of their own good will — grace, of course, assisting. It is not well to exasperate those whose working upward is voluntary; rather, one should help them on by kindness, and by showing them yet better, surer, and more rapid ways of advancing in perfection, and honoring Our Lady. "A drop of honey," said our Sodal-

ist brother, St. Francis de Sales, "does more good than a barrel of vinegar." It is a principle well worth keeping always in mind, and should make the Director always and everywhere kind and disposed *to work with the good,* as the poet says, rather than *rail at the ill.* This, however, does not exclude proper reprehension in a spirit and tone of kindness.

The Director should very seldom or never address an individual in a public meeting. If he praises one the rest will usually not like it. If he blames one all will be offended — unless, in extraordinary cases, it becomes necessary to dismiss somebody from among the Sodalists. If the Director finds it necessary to do this in public, let him do it regretfully and with the hope that the person will repent and lead a good life, and return to Our Blessed Mother's favor.

How to Prepare

Do I need to write my conference out in full? No; besides, you would often not have time to learn it by heart, or, indeed, even to write it out in full. Even if you had time, it would be better not to do it; the chances are it would make your talk too formal.

Here would be an excellent way for the Director to work up his Conference. He decides on his subject; he gets some book or passage to read on it; he reads that carefully and thoughtfully. If

he has time to read several passages, so much the better. Then he sits down quietly, pen in hand, and thinks. As he thinks he jots down notes. He arranges these; and he has his matter prepared. Just before he gives his talk, he rehearses the whole in his mind quietly, and *prays* over it. He talks it over with Our Lady. Let him remember to *pray;* that is by all odds the most essential thing in the preparation. The work is eminently supernatural and cannot be done without grace. Grace comes by prayer. Let the Director meditate, then, before God on his Conference, and beg His assistance and Our Blessed Lady's blessing. Let him remind her it is for her he is going to speak. His preparation made in this way, he goes and speaks out of the fulness of his heart, and he may be sure that his words will touch and inspire.

Many find it useful or even needful to have notes with them. If one is seated at a table, there is nothing to hinder one's using such notes to help the memory. *But one must never read them continuously* if he wishes to keep the audience interested and to benefit them.

Some Subjects for Conference

A Director of a Sodality of large boys used to ask his Council, every now and then, on what subject to address the Sodality It was a good thing to do. Their answers gave an insight into

the common needs and temptations of his audience. Besides, the plan made the boys feel particularly interested in all the Sodality work.

It is well to remark that too frequent instructions on our Blessed Mother pall on certain classes of Sodalists. They look for something more practical. We know of one Director who found it good to confine his instructions on Our Lady to the eves of her feasts and the month of May.

A great Sodality of our day, following the precedent set long before, has an officer appointed to read out the feasts and announce the fasts and the Sodality events of the near future, including the Indulgences that can be gained. Perhaps it would be well to do this oneself at the beginning or the end of the Conference.

The following list may suggest matter and sources for talks. The one in charge must not forget, though, that, whatever his subject is, he must adapt it to his audience. Cut and dry sermons, especially if written by another, will not do at all.

The Rules.

These form unquestionably the most important topic of conference. One could easily spend several years on them alone, and the profit would be great. Every item — we had almost said every word — should be explained and insisted on, again and again. It is in them that the true idea of a Sodality, its means of sanctifying the members and advancing Our Blessed Mother's honor, are set forth.

As to the Rules and as to many of the points mentioned below, the Director can get help from Schouppe, "Sodality Director's Manual," and Dahlman, "Outline Conferences."

Our Blessed Mother.

Invocations of the Litany of Loretto — Ave Maria Stella — Salve Regina — Psalms of Our Lady's Offices — Little Office of Our Lady Immaculate.

See St. Alphonsus Liguori — "Glories of Mary"; Blessed de Montfort — "True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin"; Coleridge — "The Mother of the King"; Meschler — "Our Lady's Garden of Roses"; Lescher — "Rosary"; Denis — "Salve Regina"; Coleridge — "The Mother of the Church," cc, I, 2, 7; Northcote — "Mary in the Gospels."

The Manual.

Its parts — How to use it.

The Office.

Its History — How to say it profitably.

Meditation.

A good Manual explained; *see* also Schouppe — "Easy Method of Meditation"; Roothaan — "Meditation."

The Examens.

The Manual explained.

The Sodality Virtues.

The Manual.

Confession.

Much instruction on this topic will be useful. Once a year would not be too often to give several talks on it. One must go into the most ordinary details. A large catechism like Deharbe's or Wilmer's, or that of the Christian Brothers, or Ségur on Confession, will aid one.

Frequent Communion.

Why — How often — Advantages — Mistakes. See the instruction in any good Manual and Ségur, "Holy Communion" and Coubé, "Great Supper of God," and that excellent book, "Let us go to the Holy Table."

The Duties of one's State of Life — Perfection in each action — Study — Household duties — Labor at a trade or in business — How to regard employees.

The Predominant Passion.

The Spirit of Independence.

A very important topic nowadays and in this country.

Obedience.

Purity of Intention — Presence of God, Interior Recollection — Motives — Human Respect — Life of Faith.

High Aims in Life — Love of God, and duty as a main motive — Being better than ordinary Catholics.

These are things one must often dwell on.

Vocation.

See The Manual and Damanet.

How to mortify oneself — Self control for God's sake — Self-Denial — Motives for it.

See Rodriguez, "Mortification."

Spiritual Communion

See St. Alphonsus Liguori.

Indifferentism — Out of the Church no salvation — Participation in non-Catholic services.

Exceedingly important.

Vows.

See Rodriguez.

Pious Life in the World.

See St. Francis de Sales, "Devout Life."

The Souls in Purgatory — How to aid them.

Devotion to the Saints — the Patron Saint — the Sodality Saints.

How to be devout.

Not a matter of sentiment, but rather of act.

Marriage.

A most necessary topic nowadays. One should explain the Sacrament, and its holiness, how to choose a partner — He should dwell on the indissolubility.

See Monsabré, "Marriage."

Baptism.

Duties of parents. How to baptize in danger of death.

The Commandments.

The Deadly Sins.

Dangers ahead of the Sodalist.

Sacred Pictures — How to use.

Lies.

Venial Sins.

Sacramentals — Holy water.

Conduct as to meals.

Visits to friends.

Visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

See St. Alphonsus Liguori.

Regularity and Orderliness.

Neatness.

Habits of Evil — How to overcome.

Habits of Good — How to form.

Bad Companions — Bad Example.

Charity —Kindness.

See Faber, "Conferences."

Scruples.

See Faber, "Conference."

Almsgiving.

See Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

Temptation — Despondency.

See Michel.

Feast of the Day.

Brief Life of the Saint, or explanation of the Mystery.

Passage from a Saint's life, especially of a Sodality Saint or of those of the condition in life of the Sodalists.

Explanation of the Creed.

Passages from Scripture containing a Story.

See A Lapide's "Commentary" or Maas, "Life of Christ."

Parables.

Gospel of Day.

The Exercises of the Regular Meeting.

V. Final Prayers

Notes

In many Ceremonials, after the Conference come certain prayers for the Sodality, for the souls of the faithful departed, for sick members, etc. These prayers form a good ending for the meeting.

The prayer for a sick Sodalist will, of course, not be said unless there is some one seriously

ill. The *first* name should be inserted in the prayer.

Final Invocation. The little invocation to Our Lady which comes at the end of the meeting in some ceremonials and of all the exercises in common: —

Mary, with her loving Son,
Bless us each and every one!

is a very ancient one in the Sodality, and should be dear to every Sodalist.

The Director will not forget that he is free to vary these final prayers.

In some Sodalities the *Litany of Loretto* is recited at this place; in others prayers are said, at least occasionally, other than the ones found in the Ceremonial.

Chapter XIV

The Sacraments

Recalcitrants

WITHOUT question, the most important duty of the one in charge of a Sodality is to bring it about that every member shall go often to the Sacraments. There should, indeed, be no need of urging, but human nature is perverse, and so there are Sodalists who are most unwilling to be expelled or to leave of their own accord and yet are hard to keep regular about the Sacraments. Thank God there are few such, but there are always some. The question is, how to behave towards these recalcitrants.

It will not do to force them; that might lead to unworthy reception of the Sacraments, which would send souls to destruction rather than lead them, as we desire, to greater perfection. The Director should, therefore, talk kindly to them, represent to them their obligations as Sodalists, dwell on the bad example they are giving, say how unworthy of a child of Mary such conduct is, show the advantages of regular and frequent Communion, find out and answer the reasons that deter them from it. The Director could show himself willing to do what he can to remove any obstacles that may occur. These and many other

ways of helping souls to this most salutary practice will easily suggest themselves to any one really interested in the work.

How often should Sodalists go to Communion?

Each Sodalist will ask his Confessor's advice, but all should know the mind of Holy Mother Church on the subject. This mind has been made exceedingly clear by our Holy Father Pius X. in a decree approved by him Dec. 17, 1905. It treats of the dispositions requisite for frequent and daily Communion. We give portions of the document, which is definitive.

Frequent and daily Communion is to be allowed to all the faithful of whatever class or condition in life, as a thing earnestly desired by Christ our Lord and by the Catholic Church. None can be prohibited from the Holy Table that approach in the state of grace and with a right and pious intention.

The only condition necessary for frequent and daily Communion is *freedom from mortal sin and the purpose never to sin again.*

The Confessor is to be careful not to turn any one from frequent and daily Communion who is in the state of grace and approaches with a right intention.

Pastors, Confessors, and Preachers, according to the approved doctrine of the Roman Catechism, are to exhort the Christian people with frequent

words and much zeal to so pious and wholesome a practice.

This is surely explicit enough. It only remains to apply it to Sodalists in particular.

As to them, the wish of Holy Mother Church is more pronounced. Not only are they free from mortal sin and have a right intention, they are the fervent members of Christ's flock. To them, therefore, is the invitation to daily Communion stronger and more pressing.

It is the Director's duty, according to the above decree, to exhort his Sodalists often and earnestly to make frequent and daily use of the Bread of Angels. Let him fulfil the duty cheerfully and urge *in season and out of season* all that hear him not to be content with the Communions of rule, but to go, as far as possible, every day of the week. Only so can he hope to meet the express wish of the Church of God, manifested so solemnly by Christ's Vicar upon earth.

And this he should do not to those only who are advanced in the ways of God, but to all who are Sodalists. Young and old, married and unmarried, engaged in the busy world or not, all are to be reminded of and zealously urged to this very wholesome practice. So the Holy Father has decided and so the Church of God desires. Holy Communion is not a reward for virtue, but a source of strength, a cure for venial and a preservative against mortal sins.

Confession

But the chief difficulty of Sodalists, as of all people, will be Confession. Let the Director, then, bend his efforts to bringing his Sodalists to Confession often: Communion will naturally follow.

Confession had better not be made, usually, oftener than once a week, especially in the case of girls and women. Experience shows this to be the best. But let it be *every week*, and, as far as possible, *on the same day* each week. It is wonderful how much habit helps to make weekly Confession easy.

Let the Director remind his Sodalists that, if they go to Confession once a week, they can, without going again during the week, gain any Indulgences for which Confession is a condition. He should also let them know that in virtue of a decree published in February, 1906, not even weekly Confession is a requisite if one goes to Holy Communion daily, even should he miss one or two days in the week. Let him also correct the impression which some have that they must never go to Holy Communion without going to Confession just before. There is no need; and this false impression leads many to stay away from Communion. Let it be distinctly understood, then, that they need not go to Confession again during the week unless they commit a mortal sin, and may meanwhile go to Holy Communion without

Confession — always supposing they have asked the advice of their Confessor.

In some schools, and perhaps parishes, Confessions are heard during the time of meeting. It would be better for the Sodalists to go at another time. In any case the meeting ought not to be omitted in consequence of their going then. The one in charge may shorten it, if he must, or vary the ordinary exercises, but he had better not permit a break in the regular meetings without serious cause.

General Communion

General Communion will not be as frequent as private. Once a month at least and on all the feasts of Our Lady; this is the minimum as set down in the General Statutes, and the Director would act unwisely to depart from it.

Better yet, could he have his Sodality go *once a week* in a body. It would give immense edification. Let him not believe the thing impossible. If he establishes public opinion in its favor, the custom would come in easily and stay.

Indeed, in most school Sodalities, the members go to Holy Communion every week as it is. Why could they not just as well go in a body? The same is true of at least some Sodalities in parishes — and could be made true of nearly all.

A useful custom of some Sodalities is to notify all the members by postal card as the General Communion day comes round. The people at

home see these notifications and may be benefited by their regular appearance. Of course, this practice is not necessary everywhere.

Perpetual Communion of Reparation

Could not every one in charge establish the Perpetual Communion of Reparation in his Sodality? Some Sodalists would go on Monday, some on Tuesday, etc., each going once a week, or once a month, for that intention.

In a large college in the United States, the Director got the idea of bringing this about. The Retreat time was coming. He proposed a Novena of Communions for its success. The idea was taken up by the Sodalists and carried through successfully. It was unusual to see the boys going to Holy Communion on week days, especially in such numbers. But the plan was executed nevertheless.

Then came the Annual Retreat. After it, he again proposed the week-day Communions, to be carried on, this time during the whole month of November for the Holy Souls. That too was taken up by the Sodalists, and under their management spread to the whole school. Some days as many as fifteen students received Communion — always, we may add, at the boys' Mass. Great was the edification of boys and even faculty, who had thought the project an unrealizable dream.

After November it was no trouble to get the

boys to keep on. In this way some seventy-five boys were kept going constantly to Holy Communion every week, and some went oftener. The Sunday Communions, meanwhile, did not fall off at all. The practice has since spread to other colleges.

The same was tried in a convent and was taken up with great zeal, and is in progress to this day.

At a Retreat given in several other convent schools, the mere telling of the above story and the proposition to have the custom taken up there was enough to bring it about.

Cannot every Director do something like that with his Sodality? It will draw down numberless blessings on his work and on all his surroundings.

Chapter XV

Works of Zeal

Proper to the Sodalists' Aim

WORKS of zeal have always been in vogue in Sodalities and a number of them are recommended in all Rules. The one in charge can choose such as suit his circumstances; possibly he could undertake them all, or at least do as is done in some places and have different sections of his Sodality employ themselves in different works of zeal and by this means cover the whole ground.

It is the just pride of Sodalities of our Lady that their members have always been foremost in works of zeal even others than those specially recommended to them. And no wonder. Are not Sodalists bound to aim at higher perfection than ordinary Catholics? Perfection consists in charity, and charity is active.

A few words about the works of zeal that have been most attractive to Mary's children.

1. The Teaching of Catechism

What an important thing in our day! Ignorance of our holy religion is one of the most crying evils of our age. Even many well educated Catholics do not know their religion well.

Is there in the neighborhood a parish where catechists are hard to get, or at least to keep? Why could not the Director suggest to the authorities there that he has apostles who would be glad to help them? In how many cities are there multitudes of foreigners — Italians, Slavs and others — belonging to Catholic families, indeed, but quite uninstructed in their religion. What a field for zeal!

In many parishes, the difficulty is that such catechists as could be got are themselves not well enough instructed. Sodalists could fill the gap.

The Director must not rest when he has secured employment of this kind for the zeal of his Sodalists, but follow up the work, see how it goes on, provide a set of Rules for it, give instructions how it is to be done, and point out the great charity there is in it — in a word, be himself the soul of the work.

2. Visiting the Sick

Another great work of mercy, and very proper for Sodalists.

Those visited will be, first of all — but not only — Sodalists that are ill.

Out of Sodality funds, or out of private charity, medicines could be procured for the poor, doctors' bills could be paid, little comforts for the sick room could be bought, etc.; above all, the visitors should be careful to have the priest called in time;

another holy exercise of zeal is the preparation of the sick for Communion and especially for the Viaticum.

Let there be a set of Rules for such visits. A good instruction for the visitors should be found in every Manual; let that be explained from time to time. The one in charge should be sure to insist on the supernatural side of the charity.

Some caution, however, is to be exercised in this holy work, and visits to the sick are not to be permitted where there would be danger of any kind to morals; it would always, indeed, be better to have the visits made with a companion.

3. Visits to Prisons

This, too, has always been the custom in Sodalities, and has always done a vast deal of good. It is at once a corporal and a spiritual work of mercy.

Among other excellent results, it makes the good people of a Sodality aware how much sin there is in the world and see how much they can help their neighbor to avoid.

In deciding what part of prison work to undertake, the Director cannot do better than get instruction from the St. Vincent de Paul Society. They make a study of the circumstances and are the best fitted to give advice in this and similar matters. We might add, in passing, that the very

best course would be to form a Vincentian Society among the Sodalists for these works of charity and zeal.

4. Attending Funerals

An Indulgence can be gained by Sodalists for this work of mercy, and it has been for long years a practice among them.

A beautiful custom is that which some Sodalities have of reciting the Office of the Dead at the home of a deceased member. It makes a lasting impression on all present and all that hear of it.

The Director ought never to omit, if he can help it, the saying of the Office for the Dead in the Sodality Chapel, as soon as he can conveniently gather the members. In one of our large colleges a few years ago, this was done at a special meeting. The effect was to make the Sodalists realize the solid good the Sodality was to them.

In many Sodalities, the Rule prescribes a Mass, or several, for each Sodalist that dies. The Director must be careful to have these Masses said exactly according to the Rule, and to urge the prompt payment of the other suffrages prescribed.

He should see that deceased Sodalists have their medals on when laid out and when buried. It is a consolation to the family and friends, a comfort to the other Sodalists, and a proper mark of respect to the departed child of Our Lady.

5. Help Given the Souls in Purgatory

Our Holy Mother the Church has specially blessed this work and it is one very dear to Our Lady. The Prisoners of the King are her beloved children.

What a joy it would be to her heart if all Sodalists were to make the *Heroic Act!* Let it be explained to them and let them be drawn to make it.

If the Director cannot succeed in getting all to make the Heroic Act, he can at least continually recommend the application to the Holy Souls of Indulgences gained, especially during the month of November. During this month it would be well to make up among the members a sort of treasure of satisfactory works and Indulgences collected for the Souls and put in Our Blessed Mother's hands for distribution: it would make a touching ceremony to have this treasure presented solemnly to Our Lady by the Prefect at the end of the month.

6. Altar Work

This is peculiarly fitted for girls and women, and a beautiful exercise of devotion it is. Let it not, however, be carried on without the supernatural motive.

Altar work can be done even in convent schools. The Convent Altar, or at least that of Our Lady, could be kept in linen and adorned by the Sodal-

ists. A Catholic lady should feel proud to be permitted to do it, as the great ones of the earth in former times prized the honor of presenting the bread and wine for the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

7. The Apostleship of Prayer

In the parish or school where one is directing the Sodality, one might have the members take the entire management of the Apostleship of Prayer. In any case, it is they that would be wanted for Promoters. Why could not the whole business of the organization be put in the Sodality's charge? This was done at a certain school a few years ago with excellent results. Nothing was changed as to the Promoters' meetings, the distribution of leaflets, the keeping up of the degrees, etc. The Prefect was Head Promoter.

8. The St. John Berchmans Society

Here again the Sodality might have control, and only Sodalists might be admitted to membership, or, in the case of young boys, the society might be officered entirely from the Sodality. Something similar was done in a college in the East some fifty years ago; a junior Sodality was started and its officers were elected by the senior body.

9. The St. Vincent de Paul Society

It was Sodalists that first gave the idea of this splendid work of Catholic charity and zeal. Hence,

Sodalists should be eager to aid it in every way. The one in charge should create an enthusiasm for it among his Sodalists.

If a Director is in charge of a Convent Sodality, or one of women, he could establish among them what is called an Auxiliary Society.

Let the contributions for the poor be bestowed usually through the Vincentians. Perhaps the Sodality Council could occasionally appropriate some of its funds to help on their noble work.

In some educational institutions there is a Council of the Society; naturally its members would all be Sodalists.

In several schools there is a custom of taking up a collection of money and clothes for the poor once, or several times a year. The Sodality could be in charge of that.

Again, in convents, the children could be got to sew for the poor. Thus, in one place, a beautiful custom exists of dressing a certain number of poor children every year for their first Holy Communion. How proud our Blessed Mother must feel of Sodalists so devoted to her Divine Son!

Another form charity to those in need could take is the management of intelligence bureaus, to which Catholic girls coming to strange cities could have recourse when in need of employment, or when in quest of proper boarding houses, etc.

These are some of the works of zeal which

Sodalists could engage in. In some cases, organization among the members for these or the like purposes would not be easy, perhaps, but it would please Our Lady to have each and every Sodalist belong to some, or many, charitable organizations and be faithful in carrying out their rules.

10. Lay Apostolate

There are many ways in which this work of zeal can be exercised. One is the practice of giving notice to a priest of unbaptized children of Catholic parents, or of the religious neglect of the issue of mixed marriages, or of orphans who are in danger of falling a prey to sectarian proselytism.

Another is the bringing to a priest of non-Catholics who are desirous of being instructed in the faith. Many of these people, from ignorance, of course, dread making advances of this kind.

A third is the care to place needy girls, or women, or young people in positions in which their morals will be safeguarded.

Still another is so important as to deserve a section to itself.

11. The Apostleship of the Press

In our day there are few acts of zeal that are more proper for a Sodalist. It is a Sodalist Saint that is the patron of the press, St. Francis de Sales.

Ignorance of our holy faith is everywhere about us; with ignorance is often associated prejudice. Both are removed by the spread of Catholic literature, which thus becomes the means of salvation to numberless souls.

We are happy to learn that this work has been taken up by an association of Sodalities in one of our great cities. May our Blessed Mother bless all those who are engaged in it! The Apostleship is exercised by distributing sheets, pamphlets, and books on our holy religion, by answering attacks on the faith in the public papers and magazines, by writing explanations of our belief, etc.

Not all Sodalists, indeed, can take up every kind of such work, but all can do something to help it on.

Chapter XVI

Monthly Patrons

Meaning and Choice

HE distribution of Monthly Patrons has been a long time in use in Sodalities.

It is done as follows : —

On the last day of the month, or on the last meeting day, or on the day of the Monthly Recollection, the Prefect, or some other Sodalist, is ready with a basket or box at the door. In the receptacle are little slips or cards printed with the names of the Saints of the coming month, each card containing also some virtue to practise and some motto for reflection. In some places, each card contains a picture of the Saint. As the Sodalists go out, each one takes at random out of the box one of these cards. During the next month the Sodalist pays special honor to the Saint and practises the virtue and reflects often on the motto.

Interesting and very edifying stories are told of the fruits of this practice, which is said to have originated with St. Francis Borgia.

If one cannot secure the printed slips, let him write out a sufficient number or try to manage

some other plan for selecting a patron each month.

On the day on which monthly patrons are chosen, it might be well, as was suggested above, to recite or sing the Litany of the Saints at the end of the meeting.

Chapter XVII

The Monthly Recollection

What it is

MOST salutary practice of many Sodalities is that of the Monthly Recollection. This is an exercise which cannot, perhaps, be held in all such bodies, at least in common, but it is wonderful how a little good-will on the part of the members and ingenuity on the part of the Director often make it feasible where it was thought impossible.

The Monthly Recollection is nothing more nor less than a day of retreat, with this special feature added that it is also a preparation for death.

General devotions enough are given in any good Manual for conducting the exercises. Following are certain hints : —

Silence

The Director should urge the observance of as perfect silence as can be had. A very able and experienced giver of Retreats once said : *No silence, no retreat* — and it is perfectly true. For solid profit, the soul must be in a receptive state ; it is hard to bring that about without the aid of silence.

If the Sodalists are all living in the house with the one in charge, keeping silence should be a

simple enough matter, depending on nothing but their own good-will. The others in the house with them could be got to keep silence at meals and whenever they meet the Sodalists, or the Sodalists could, perhaps, be given their meals and recreation by themselves — of course by recreation is not meant *talk*. The whole day, or whatever part is devoted to the Recollection, should be uninterrupted as to silence.

In the case of extern students, or people in the world, there is more difficulty. But even they can keep silence almost, if not quite, perfectly. Let the Director persuade them of its importance and get them to make the extra effort. They will be amply repaid in the grace they will have, for God our Lord loves generosity.

Notice

Of course, one will have to give due notice — say a week ahead — of the Day of Recollection.

Exercises

The Director will choose the exercises to be performed.

Among them will be a Meditation of some kind on *Death*. There will be at least one in every good Manual; others can be composed, or can be taken from books — Kempis is particularly useful. It will be easy, therefore, to vary from month to month. This Meditation will make an excellent *beginning* for the day, for it will have the effect of

setting the retreatants thinking seriously. The one in charge should give the points himself over night, if he can collect his Sodalists at that time. Let them make the Meditation next morning before Mass.

Of course, it will be a Communion day, and of course, a *General Communion* day — namely, the Sodalists will go to Communion in a body. After Mass is over, the chapel should be in the possession of the Sodality. The Director would do well to read himself the Thanksgiving, if it is made aloud after Communion, or at least depute for that duty some one who is highly respected and is very exemplary.

Breakfast comes next. If it is a school, it would help to have something out of the ordinary served. — Some book could be read during the breakfast, either on Holy Communion or, by way of introduction, on something of the day's work. Let it be an interesting book, and carefully chosen. It would be well if the Director could read himself, but that would usually not be possible. It would prevent his being on hand when the Sodalists are free. They will want to talk to him about their spiritual life. He will allow them, of course, and give them all the help he can, and be very kind and considerate.

After breakfast, a *visit* to the chapel can be made in common. This is a brief visit — two minutes is sufficient. No prayers are said aloud.

At a convenient hour, the *Monthly Examen* is made. Any room might be used where they could write. The Director could read the items one at a time, pausing after each to let the Sodalists examine themselves and jot down their reflections. — This exercise will often take a whole hour; so, in the arrangement of the day, space enough must be left for it. — If the Director reads the items himself, let him sit at the back and not where he might appear to be watching the Sodalists.

As to the rest of the day, the one in charge will find help enough in his own experience, or in a good Manual. Let everything be orderly and run on smoothly. Better to have plenty to do; otherwise the time will drag. It is well to make the day pass so that all will be glad when the next comes.

If one has the singing of the Litany of Loretto, or of hymns, let not the practising be done on the Day of Recollection. It is hard to be at singing practice without talking.

The Chapel

The Chapel, or the Statue of Our Lady, should be neatly, but not expensively, decorated. Let the Sodality pay for it and the Sacristans have charge of it.

When not in Common

If it is not possible to have the exercises together, the members should be urged to make the Monthly Recollection privately in their homes, or,

perhaps, in small parties. It would help to suggest an order of time for them and set down the exercises and the list of readings, etc. Perhaps — but that would be somewhat expensive — the Sodality could send around a *printed* form for each Monthly Recollection.

Chapter XVIII

The Month of May

Various Methods

NATURALLY, Our Lady's Sodality will have special devotions for Mary's Month.

One way to conduct these devotions is to have Sodality members, a different one each day, read a piece composed or selected by each to honor Our Lady. This has been done with good effect in several colleges. Non-Sodalists attended, but took no part in the writing or reading of papers.

In some places, the Prefect and officers conduct all the devotions. This also is a good plan.

One thing the Sodality can do: it can collect funds for decorating the shrine of Our Lady and keeping it beautiful during the month. At one of our American colleges there used to be a custom that Sodalists went to every boy in the school and begged for the statue. One year, the sum realized in the first appeal was no less than seventy-five dollars.

If the work of caring for the shrine is laborious, or takes much time, there can be a different band in charge each week. This might be good in any case, as it would excite emulation.

On some day during the month, it would be well to have a celebration with more than ordinary splendor. The details will depend on the circumstances of the place, and the means of the Sodality. There might always be a solemn *Renewal of the Act of Consecration.* Perhaps, if one is in a college or a convent, the Sodalist could be granted a holiday, or at least a half-holiday. For the ordinary days during the month, one could have a *Meditation* on some event in Our Lady's life, or on some one of her prerogatives. There could be a special *visit* made each day in common to her statue, with appropriate readings or prayers. The *Litany* could be sung. Perhaps one could have *Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament* every day, as is done in many places. A little *discourse* by the Director or by another priest each day is a very common way of distinguishing the Month of Our Lady.

Communions should be more frequent during the month of May. Perhaps one could, at least at this time of the year, have the weekly General Communion, and the Perpetual Communion of Reparation.

Chapter XIX

The Patronal Feast

THE Patronal Feast is the great Sodality day and the custom has always been to make it a memorable one. Here are some suggestions.

The practices of piety recommended in most Rules for the nine days before the feast ought not to be neglected.

If the Sodality is in a school, let the feast itself be a holiday, at least for the Sodalists.

Let there be a Solemn Mass, or at least as grand a one as is possible under the circumstances. A first-class sermon, also, would help much.

There will, of course, be a regular meeting, according to the Rule.

Let the Benediction be extra in some way — as in vestments, in singing, etc., and even be solemn, if possible.

The Solemn Reception of new members could take place just before the Benediction and could be held in the chapel or wherever Our Lady's Statue, beautifully adorned for the occasion, could be set up. Others could be present — indeed, the more the better — but let only members participate. The full form of the Ceremonial should be carried out.

The Director should be careful to have the medals and diplomas and manuals in time. They could be gracefully arranged where they would be seen by all and make an impression on them. All such things help.

An elegantly printed program of the event would add much to the splendor of the occasion. It should contain the full names and the offices of all concerned. One very beautiful program which we saw recorded the names of even the altar boys.

If the day itself is inconvenient, the celebration could be held on the following Sunday.

It is well to have a feast on the day for the Sodalists, a feast made notable as well for its good things as for its cheeriness and good feeling.

If it is the proper time of the year, the election of officers could come at the end of the festivities and on the day itself.

Chapter XX

The Annual Retreat

Importance

HE Rule calls for a Retreat every year. Manifestly, it is an exercise of the very first importance and should be conducted with great care. Needless to add, it should never be omitted.

Preparation

The first thing to do is to excite enthusiasm for the Retreat. As soon as the date is settled — that belongs to the Director — he should begin to talk the Retreat up. He could give a conference on it — or several — some time in advance, and explain what means to take in preparing for it. The best preparation is a spirit of generosity, goodwill and eagerness, and the sense that the Exercises will mean much for the salvation and the perfection of the individual souls and for the common good.

It would help to get prayers for its success, prayers from the members, from the little ones in orphan asylums or schools, and from religious Communities. It would be well to add a prayer at each meeting for this same end. A novena of Communions is also in use in some places, some members going each day. If the Director is a

priest, he will not forget to give the Retreat a special memento in Holy Mass. An excellent prayer is for all the Sodalists to say the beads each day for some time before the Retreat for graces from on high. The Indulgences could be put in Our Lady's hands for the souls in Purgatory.

In this way the Sodalists will come to the work thoroughly prepared, and the efforts of the Father who gives the Exercises will be enforced by so many powerful appeals to the throne of Mercy and the bounty and loving-kindness of Our Mother.

Silence

The Retreat will fail of much of its effect, if silence is not observed accurately. No silence, no retreat. Let the Director, then, urge the members to remove the obstacles, if there are any.

If one is in charge of a college or a convent Sodality, the thing is easy. Public example will make it so. Perhaps the rest of the school are in retreat at the same time as the Sodality — which is the usual way — but whatever the other pupils do, the Director must be sure and have his Sodalists observe silence.

If it is a Sodality of extern pupils, or of people in the world, silence must nevertheless be urged. A little good-will makes the thing possible. Going about daily duties brings, indeed, the need of an occasional word, but such words can be

made fewer during the days of recollection. Meal time is a greater difficulty, but even that can be managed. We hear of children — girls — while conversation is going on at table around them, keeping silence, and bearing the laughter and jokes about their *singularity* and *foolishness* and what not. Older people can do as much, if they make up their minds to it.

Who is to Give It?

Usually, the Retreat is given by a priest. If the Director is a priest, it might be well for him to give it, though most Directors and Sodalists prefer to have a stranger.

If the one in charge is not a priest, he must try to secure one in time. If he cannot, then let him simply make bold to give the Retreat himself. He has often made Retreats and remembers how priests give them. Let him follow the exercises and instructions and copy the manner of those whom he has heard. Indeed, when a priest cannot be had, a Retreat given by the one in charge is likely to do a vast deal of good. Much in a Retreat depends on talking so as to suit the needs and circumstances of the audience. Who knows these things better than the one in charge of the Sodality? By all means, therefore, rather than have no Retreat, or none by a priest, let the Director, or the Subdirector, or even the Directress, give it.

How Many Days?

Three days is the usual thing in Sodalities. When there are but three, they should at least be *full* days. The zealous Director will not be satisfied — unless he simply cannot do better — to have the Retreat day begin at 9 A. M. and end at 4 P. M. People make sacrifices willingly for a Mission, and that lasts a week. They will rise in time for 5 o'clock Mass and will go out without breakfast and will miss no portion of any exercise. Sodalists should be willing to do as much for their Retreat. Let the Director get his retreatants together for Mass at 6.30 or so, and keep them occupied all day until as late an hour as possible in the evening. Of course all this is easy enough in a boarding school. But it can be done with retreatants living at home, too.

But it is a pity to have so few days as three. Let the Director see if he cannot manage four at least, or five. The Exercises have to be crushed up or curtailed to get them into three days, and the Father who gives the Retreat is usually not able to go into a part of the Exercises which would be exceedingly useful for Sodalists. With but three days, he is forced to make the Retreat resemble a Mission; now, a Retreat to Sodalists should not be of the same character as a Mission — that is, if it is a real Sodality of fervent Catholics.

Reading

Whoever gives the Retreat, it will be the Director's place to see to the reading. He should have first-class readers and get them interested in their duty. If the choice of the book is left to him, let him pick out matter that suits the exercises as they proceed. Among other useful books Mother Loyola's "Little Treasures" will be found most excellently fitted for Retreat reading. The things read should be interesting and easy to follow, as well as altogether spiritual and of a high order of spirituality. Such are the things Mother Loyola supplies.

Part taken by the One in Charge

Again, it will be the Director's business to assist the Father in any way the Father wishes. The Director can be of great help to him in many ways. Let him give his assistance gladly and constantly.

Another point: the Director's advice about their lives will be asked by the Sodalists during the Retreat. Let him be on hand and give it kindly and spiritually — he need not, of course, be told that he must not interfere with the *Confessor's* office.

Singing

Singing, at some periods, is often useful in a Retreat. We have known retreatants to be much assisted by the *Miserere* sung after Benediction on the days when *Sin* is the subject. The *Te Deum*

makes an appropriate ending for the days of recollection ; it is sometimes replaced by the *Holy God,* which is frequently known by all and can be rendered congregationally. Hymns full of unction sung after Holy Communion are helpful and consoling. The *Sacred Heart League Hymn* or some other stirring composition would do good service at the beginning of the second week. Retreats are often begun in a very impressive way with the solemn *Veni Creator.* Some Fathers desire singing at Mass during the Retreat, and it is a great help for many people.

The Director will find it well to neglect none of these devices for making the Retreat more effective.

Among other uses of all this, it will be remembered that keeping silence is much easier when there is some singing during the day, especially if it is by the retreatants.

Breakfast on the Closing Day

Let the breakfast after the final Mass and Communion be taken, if possible, in common, and let it be very cheery and bright. Everybody will be in good spirits, and the general happiness at this first breaking of silence will contribute much to bind the members together.

Nothing expensive is necessary at this breakfast ; in some places a cup of good coffee and a roll are considered sufficient.

Souvenir

It has been found useful at times to give each retreatant a little printed card with thoughts and prayers suitable for continuing the effect of the Retreat. If the Director gets up such a card, let him have it beautifully worded and typographically fine.

A *program* also of the Retreat containing the order of time, and even that of the exercises, if this is thought well, is sometimes profitable; its terms are arranged by the Father who gives the Retreat. The program will be more prized if it contains the *names* of the retreatants.

After the Retreat

After the Retreat is over, the one in charge of the Sodality should keep its memory fresh by often referring to it, recalling its salient features, urging its lessons, etc.

The next Monthly Day of Recollection might be a renewal of the Annual Retreat. The Director might make all the Meditations of the day repetitions of Retreat Exercises, and could recall the chief points insisted on then and apply and urge them anew.

Chapter XXI

Renewal of the Act of Consecration

When

VERY beautiful and inspiring custom in some Sodalities is that of the Renewal of the Act of Consecration.

This takes place once a year, or oftener. The day or days can be determined by the one in charge, on advice of the Council. The Month of May is one natural time and the Patronal Feast is another.

How to Conduct It

It is well to have the manner of conducting this function fixed. This is done in the *Ceremonial* of some manuals. It goes without saying that the Director will make as much of it as he can for Our Blessed Mother's honor. The essential element is the reciting of the Act. This may be done by the Prefect alone, or by the Prefect and members together, they repeating the Act phrase for phrase after the Prefect, or by each member separately. The last is undoubtedly the most solemn way and can easily be followed when the Sodalists are not too numerous.

Some members will not be able to be present. A printed Act of Consecration could be sent them to return signed. The Prefect would then present these signed Acts to Our Lady in a little address.

In the case of the other Sodalists the order of precedence in the Renewal should be that of dignity.

This Renewal could be made in the chapel or before a shrine of Our Lady specially set up for the occasion.

One way of saving time in it, without lessening the solemnity, is to have several prie-dieus prepared, and at each a Sodalist ready to recite the Act as the preceding one finishes.

Chapter XXII

Final Departure from School

The Custom Described

HE custom we are about to describe is peculiar to school Sodalities. The time when the student years are ending and what is called real life is beginning is a pathetic and a most important period in a life. It is the desire to consecrate it in a special way to Our Lady that has led to the establishment of the following ceremony.

The Sodalists gather on one of the last days of the scholastic year, just before leaving school. Those who are not to return renew very solemnly their Act of Consecration to Our Blessed Mother, adding, perhaps, a few words expressive of their determination to belong forever to her.

The Director addresses them for the last time as school Sodalists and brings home to them their responsibilities in the various states of life they are soon to engage in. He reminds them that they are Sodalists still, always, and everywhere, and that more will be expected of them than of ordinary Catholics.

Addresses may be made by the other Sodalists, too, and a reply by one of those who are to depart.

Something similar could be done in the case of Sodalists who are leaving for another city or country.

It is customs like these that touch the heart and attach to the Sodality.

Chapter XXIII

Members no longer Active

Keeping up Connections with Absent Members

IT will happen that members of a Sodality will move to other parishes or cities, or will be prevented by prolonged sickness from attending meetings. One ought not to allow them to be forgotten. Every Sodalist that is not lawfully expelled remains a member in full right. Therefore the Sodality should keep up communication with them.

In this regard, an excellent custom like the following exists in many places. A priest of the Eastern portion of this country joined a Sodality in Switzerland, when he was living in that part of the world as a boy. It is long years now since he left Switzerland, but every year he receives from his Sodality there a paper containing the Act of Consecration, a list of the Sodalists deceased during the year, and a short Exhortation. The Act of Consecration he signs and returns. It is this usage which is recommended in some Rules.

There is at least one school in this country where a similar practice is in vogue.

In this school, besides the yearly communication like the above, a catalogue of all the members is printed and sent to the members. No doubt, such active interest in absent members is the source of many graces to them.

Another practice may be mentioned. In a great college in Europe, there is on the wall of the Sodality chapel a large panel which is being gradually filled with beautiful gold slips containing the names of the Sodalists that have finished their schooling and gone to their life work. Each one, as he departs from the beloved home of his youth, has his name handsomely painted and leaves it in its place on the wall. It is a kind of perpetual reminder to Our Lady that he belongs to her.

Much good can be done with former pupils who were members of a college or convent Sodality. They should be encouraged to return to their school and visit their former Directors. The Director has many a chance in such visits of saying a useful word and giving a salutary hint for the better conduct of life.

It is a custom in some schools — and a very wholesome one — to invite their former members back for the Monthly Recollection and the Annual Retreat. These find in the days of quiet and silence a most serviceable break in a distracting life in the world. Needless to suggest, their return to the Alma Mater should be made pleasant as well as profitable.

It would contribute much to general edification if the absent members would occasionally write to the Sodality. In some Rules this is expressly recommended. Many Societies have corresponding members; why should not Sodalities?

Chapter XXIV

The One in Charge of the Sodality

Importance

THE most important personage in a Sodality is the one in charge of it.

On him or her all depends, absolutely all. To be sure, the grace of God can work without human aid, but, as a matter of fact, it seldom does. On what he or she is, then, on how he or she is disposed, on what he or she does, it is no exaggeration to say, everything depends, absolutely everything.

What kind of person, therefore, should the one in charge be?

Personal Holiness

First of all, *he should himself be holy.* Strange it is, but holiness is produced by holiness, or rather the fruits of sanctity are not often brought forth unless through means that are sanctified. One's first duty, therefore, is to make and keep oneself united to God. This does not mean that the Director must perform miracles or have ecstasies, but it does mean personal and every-day sanctity. The Director must be devoted and whole-souled in his duties, whether as a religious not in holy orders, or as a religious priest, or as a secular priest — whichever he happens to be. He

must be faithful in his own meditation and in his own examens, if he expects to get his Sodalists faithful in theirs; he must be regular at Holy Mass and the Sacraments, if he would bring them to that. He must be bent on overcoming himself and in downing particularly his own pride and predominant passion, if he would successfully urge his charge to do so — he must be zealous in his daily duties, whatever they are. Nothing so moves to goodness as to see goodness in those who are our guides.

Zeal for Souls

Secondly, *he must be zealous for souls*, especially those that are committed to his care in the Sodality. Only zeal, begotten of the love of God and sustained by His constant actual graces, will be able to keep him up under the many trials his position will bring him.

There will be reverses of all kinds. The one whom the Director thought his best Sodalist will go off and marry a Protestant — perhaps before a Protestant minister. The Treasurer, apparently entirely trustworthy, will have no means to refund the money he ought to be in possession of. The superiors of the one in charge will not see things with his eyes and will constantly balk him. His very friends and companions will laugh at him for his pains. Bickerings will spring up among his Sodalists, and petty jealousies — about all manner

of things. He will, without any faults of his, misjudge some character — with disastrous results. It will be hard to keep his Sodalists at Holy Communion, or even at meetings, regularly. The weather will be forbidding on the meeting day. Sickness will prevent his being at his post — and so on and so forth. He may be sure in advance that the devil will set himself most zealously to work to thwart the plans formed for Our Lady's honor. The devil has no love for her. So, let the one in charge be prepared, and when the difficulties come, be not surprised, but be brave under them and overcome them to the best of his ability — above all, *keep at work*, no matter what happens. He will need plenty of zeal for that.

Method

Thirdly, he will need to be *methodical*. There will be much to do — more than he can well do without order. Let him make out a list of things to be done at different times and use it.

See Everything

Again, he has to be *all-seeing*. He must comprehend the situation always and see to the depths of every combination of circumstances. Vigilance, then, he will be in constant need of.

Not Appear to See

He must *not appear to see*. Every one in charge of others knows how important it is not *to let on*,

as the saying is, and to condone without seeming even to know.

The Source of Inspiration

He must *give the inspiration* and be at the bottom of every project. Things will not succeed without it.

In societies of all kinds, but especially in Sodalities of young people, the Director must begin and carry on and accomplish. At the same time, he would make a vast mistake if he really took all the work on himself. He is an *overseer.* His doing all is the doing all of an overseer. An overseer is not forever interfering, but manages. The Director should act in like manner; the more, in fact, he remains hid the better. Each officer and member must be left to fulfil the duty assigned: the Director sees that it is done. In this way he will be the soul of every movement.

Not Work for Reward here below

The Director must *not work for reward here below.* As to human reward, he must simply not expect it. He will often fail to get it. Gratitude will not be given him, perhaps, when he most expects it. Praise will often not be forthcoming. Not even appreciation will be his. For money he should not work in any case: it would be unworthy of so high an office as his is.

The True Reward

His reward will come.

He will in the first place be insuring his own salvation. One of the Saints has said that devotion to Our Blessed Mother is the best index that one is among the elect. There can be no doubt of the Director's devotion to her, if he does his part in the Sodality he has charge of.

More than that, he will have from his Sodality abundant help to be perfect in his life, priestly or religious, for he will see many, many examples of virtues of the highest kind in those who are in his charge. If he were not touched and moved to imitate them, he would be a most extraordinary being. Goodness reacts.

Let him remember, too, that he is working for Our Lady. St. Bernard said that no one was ever neglected that appealed to her. The Director's whole life will be an appeal to her. Let him be sure, then, that he will not be neglected. Her motherly kindliness and love will pursue him in all his actions. And as the toil and stress of life are ending, when comfort will be most welcome, he will feel that all is right. And when the final hour of struggle is passed and the labor is all over, he will know at home — at his Mother's home in Heaven — that she was his friend and support. He will see that when he succeeded in her work, it was through aid given by her; when he failed,

it was because it was better so, according to her loving plans for his own advancement in her Blessed Son's ways, and for that of those who were dear to Him. Many and many of them he will find at home before him; more will be to come; he and they will for ever rejoice in their own dear Mother's happy and approving smile. He, particularly, will have thanks from her own blessed lips for what he did as her vicegerent.

Trust Mary

Finally, therefore, in all difficulties and in all successes, let the Director remember to go to Mary. She is in a special way his Mother. Let him trust her, then, as he ought to trust his mother. Let him rely upon her for everything and always, go to her for advice, go to her for ways and means, remind Mary that it is her work he is doing. She will not be able to resist the appeal.

In success, too, he must remember to go and thank her. Let him never be surprised that he has succeeded. It is she who brought it about — and she will always be true and kindly.

Only let him *trust her*.

Mary with her loving Son,
Bless us, each and every one!

Index

Index

Absent members, 219.
Academies, 78.
Accounts, 85.
Advantages of aggregation 5, 29, 35.
After the retreat, 209.
Aggregation to the First Primary Sodality
    persons empowered to aggregate, 10.
    express permission required, 10.
    points to be specified in application, 10.
    participation in indulgences and privileges, 11.
    advantages, 29.
    does not impair autonomy, 35.
    model letters of application, 30.
Aim
    of the book, vii.
    of Sodality, xiii.
    of Sodalists, 112.
Altar work, 75.
Apostleship of example, 112.
Apostleship of prayer, 176.
Apostleship of the press, 178.
Apostolate, Lay, 178.
Application, letters of, 30.
Appointment of director by Fr. Provincial or the Bishop, 12.
Approved candidates, 46.
Assistants, 20, 94.
Attendance at meetings, 33.
Attending funerals, 174.
Autonomy, 35.

Belongings, 86, 120.
Bishop's consent for erection and aggregation, 11.
Bona Mors Association, 114.

Books to read, 140.
Breakfast after retreat, 73.

Candidates for office, 93.
Canonical erection, 7.
Catechism, teaching of, 171.
Changes of title, director, rules, place, 24.
Characteristics of Sodality, 39, 40.
Charges for diploma, 86.
Charity, 86.
Children of Mary, 7, 50, 72.
Choir-master, 95.
Church functions, 76.
Closing day, 208.
Communion
    instruction, 111.
    daily communion, 162.
    frequent communion, 162.
    general communion, 165.
    perpetual communion of reparation, 166.
Conference, 147–152.
Confession, 110.
General confession, 111.
Conformity to established usage, 14.
Consultors, 95.
Contributions, 83.
Council
    appointment of, 20.
    meetings of, 100.
Councillors, 100.

Day of meeting, 132.
Definition of Sodality, 3.
Departure from school, 215.
Devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, 4, 39.
Diary, 78.
Diploma
    of aggregation, 11.
    of admission, 86.
Directions for saying the office, 146.
Directness in director's talks, 148, 149.

Director of retreat, 204.
Director of Sodality, 12, 14, 207, 225–232.
Dissolution, 5.
Distinctions, 69.
Dues, 84.
Duties, 19.

Ecclesiastical corporation, 5.
Elections, 91.
    yearly, 92.
    order of exercises, 96–98.
Enrolment, essential for validity of admission 17.
Entertainments, 74.
Examen of conscience, 107.
Exclusiveness
    based on zeal, 40.
    based on class distinctions, 43.
Excursions, 67.
Exemptions, 24, 71.
Exercises
    in common, xiii.
    of piety, 103.
    of regular meeting, 139.
    of day of recollection, 188.
    of patronal feast, 199.
Exhibition of Sodality work, 77.
Expenses, 83.

Feasts, 73.
Finances, 81.
First Primary Sodality, 5, 9.
Fraternal union, 57–63.

General statutes binding on all, 15.
Guardian angel, 96.

Holidays, 67.

Illustrations, 146.
Importance
    of fraternal union, 59.

Importance — *continued.*
of retreat, 203.
of director, 227.
Indulgences,
participation in those of the Prima Primaria by aggregation, 9, 21, 22.
by privilege, 10, 21, 22.
conditions, 22.
commutation of conditions, 22.
Inspiration, source of, 230.
Installation of officers, 77.
Instructor of candidates, 95.
Interest, 65–79.
Invocation of the Holy Ghost, 144.
Invocation of Our Lady, 158.

Junior Sodalities, 48.

Knowledge of all the members, 113.

Law of love, 19.
Length of reading, 139.
Length of retreat, 206.
Lent, penances for, 115.
Librarian, 96.
Litany of Loretto, 146, 158.

Mail, use of, 79.
Manifestations of fraternal union, 59.
Mass, 109.
Medal, 14.
Meditation, 147.
Meetings, 125, 131, 132, 133.
Membership
eligibility, 4.
essentials of reception, 16–18.
probation, 18, 44, 46.
ceremonies of reception, 18–19.
care in selection of members, 44.
admonitions to possible members, 45.
means of attracting desirable members, 45.

Membership — *continued.*
limit to members, 45.
prayers for dead members, 62.
honorary members, 71.
lists of members, 75.
visits to sick members, 172.
absent members, 211.
Money, 23, 86.
Month of May, 193.
Monthly patrons, 147, 181.
Monthly recollection
in common, 185.
in private, 191.

Need of rule, 53.
Newspaper notices, 75.
Non-aggregated Sodalities, 29, 34.
Notification of Sodality events, 79.
Number
of Sodalities in the same church, 11.
of members in a Sodality, 46.

Obstacles to fraternal union, 60.
Officers
consultation of manuals, xv.
higher, elected by Sodality, 20, 91, 92.
minor, elected by council, 20.
council appointed by director, 20.
list of candidates drawn up by director, 20.
appointed *pro tem*, 35.
treatment of, 98.
Offices
Organization, 34.
Little Office of the Immaculate Conception, 145.
Office of the Dead, 145.
directions for saying, 146.
Litany of Loretto, 146.

Participation in indulgences, good works, and prayers, 10.
Patronal feast, 197.
Patrons of Sodality, 6, 33.

Personal holiness of director, 227.
Picnics, 67.
Places where a Sodality may be erected, 34.
Postulants, 34.
Practices of piety, 106.
Praise of officers, 101.
Prayer
    for dead members, 62.
    vocal, 106.
    mental, 108.
    final, 157.
Prefect, 20, 94.
Preparation
    for reading, 137.
    for conferences, 157.
    for the retreat, 203.
Prisons, visits to, 173.
Private talks, 113.
Privileges of Sodality members, 71.
Probation, not essential but customary, 18, 44.
Programs, 74, 200, 209.
Property, 23.
Publication
    of names, 75.
    of accounts, 85.

Qualities of officers, 93, 94.

Reader, 94.
Reading, 108, 137.
Reception, requisites for valid, 16.
Recollection, 185.
Refreshments, 73.
Reminders, 105.
Removal from one church to another, 9.
Renewal of act of consecration, 211.
Retreat, 202.
Reward of zeal, 230, 231.
Rules
    history, 15.
    crystallized in general statutes, 15.

Rules — *continued.*
observance, 53.
not binding under sin, 54, 55.

Sacraments, 159.
Selection of books or passages for reading, 138.
Self-seeking, 83.
Sick, 172.
Silence
during recollection, 187.
during retreat, 204.
Simplicity in director's talks, 148.
Society
of St. John Berchmans, 176.
of St. Vincent de Paul, 176.
Sodality chapel, 119.
Sodalities in Jesuit houses and churches, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 23, 29, 30.
Souls in Purgatory, 175.
Souvenir of retreat, 209.
Spiritual reading, 108.
Steps to be taken in establishing a Sodality
aggregation to the First Primary Sodality, 5.
canonical erection by Bishop, 7.
appointment of director, 12.
Stereopticon views, 150.
Sub-director, 14.
Sub-directress, 14.
Subjects for conferences, 152.
Substitutes for the office, 146.

Unwillingness to approach the Sacraments, 161.

Virtues of sodalists, 45, 112.
Visits
to the sick, 172.
to prisons, 173.

Waiting list, 46.
Watchfulness on director's part, 229.
Weekly confession, 164.

Works
of the Sodality, 4.
of zeal, 169.
recommended, xiii.

Zeal
of members, 171.
of director, 228.

The University Press, Cambridge, U. S. A.

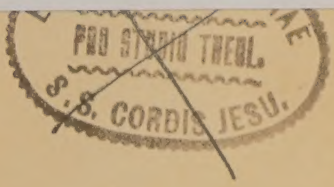
CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL UNION
BX809.V6M82 C001
SODALITY OF OUR LADY NEW YORK
3 0311 00039 0653

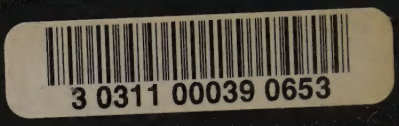
19968

BX 809 .V6 M84 1907

Mullan, Elder

Sodality of Our Lady




3 0311 00039 0653